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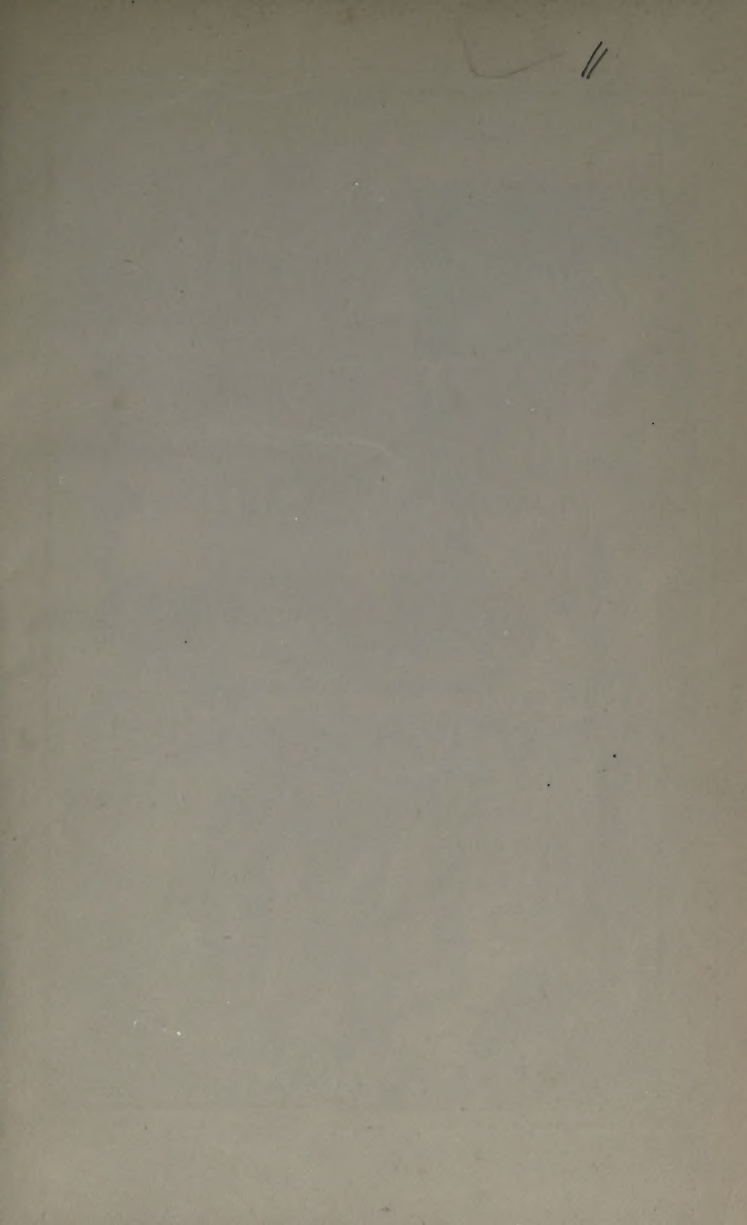
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THE PLEASURES
OF BOOKLAND

Uniform with this book :

JOYS OF THE GARDEN
IN FRIENDSHIP'S GARDEN
IN FRIENDSHIP'S NAME
IN NATURE'S GARDEN
THE JOYS OF LIFE
WHAT MAKES A FRIEND
THE BOND OF MUSIC





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THE PLEASURES OF BOOKLAND

COMPILED BY
JOSEPH SHAYLOR

Author of *The Fascination of Books*

WITH

An Introduction by

ANDREW LANG

All these things here collected are not mine,
But divers grapes make but one kind of wine,
So I from many learned authors took
The various matters written in this book;
What's not mine own shall not by me be father'd,
The most part I in many years have gather'd.

John Taylor, the Water-Poet,
1580-1654.

492742

LONDON

6.6.49

TRUSLOVE & HANSON LIMITED

[1914?]



Truslove & Bray, Ltd., Printers, West Norwood, S.E.

TO
My Wife
WHOSE SYMPATHETIC COMPANIONSHIP
IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN
A WORLD OF
BOOKS

PREFACE

THE present volume is an enlarged and re-arranged Edition of a work issued by the Compiler in 1898, entitled "*The Pleasures of Literature and the Solace of Books.*" This book has been long out of print, but many of the extracts contained in the previous volume have been incorporated in the present one, also the delightful introduction contributed by Mr. Andrew Lang.

In the preface to my previous volume I made the following remark respecting my extracts, which is as pertinent now as it was then. The reason for this selection is the growing interest taken in books, and also

the fact that during recent years some of our great statesmen and men of letters have written and said many things about books which are well worth detaching from their surroundings and including amongst other gems from some of our masters in English literature. Carlyle has said that "Literature is the thought of thinking minds"; and every student of literature knows how completely true is this remark. If the perusal of these extracts should stimulate the mind of either book-worm or book-butterfly, one object for which the compilation was undertaken will have been attained. It is, however, hoped that a higher result will follow; that of directing readers to the sources from which these gems have been obtained, where they may drink deeply the thoughts which

flow from master-minds, and which in their supply know no exhaustion.

The warmest and most sincere thanks of the compiler are given to the various authors from whose works these selections are taken, but special acknowledgment is here made to the Right Hon. Lord Rosebery, the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, the Right Hon. Lord Goschen; Mr. Sidney Lee and Mr. Henry N. Stevens for their courtesy and consent, also to Messrs. Bickers & Son for the extracts from Matthew Arnold and the Right Hon. Lord Morley, to Mr. George Allen for the selection from Mr. Ruskin, to Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton for that by Dean Farrar, and to Messrs. Macmillan & Co. for those by Lord Avebury and Mr. Frederic Harrison. Should there, however, be any

author from whose works an extract has been taken and not specially acknowledged, I hope this general recognition of indebtedness will be deemed a sufficient expression of my gratitude.

JOSEPH SHAYLOR.

GLOUCESTER HOUSE,
HOLDEN ROAD,
WOODSIDE PARK, N.



INTRODUCTION

BY

ANDREW LANG

“FOR the sins of the learned,” says Swift, or Arbuthnot, “Heaven permitted the invention of Printing.” In the following volume, Mr. Arthur Balfour, in a vein of paradox, doubts whether the invention of printing is to be regretted. In my poor opinion, it has proved a great blow to Literature. Nobody can maintain that printing has produced greater poets, or philosophers, or historians, than they who wrote when books were confined to manuscript. Homer, the Greek Tragedians, Herodotus, Thucydides, Lucretius, Simonides, Virgil, Plato, Tacitus, Catullus, Horace, have not been surpassed, while the Prophets of Israel remain unique, as do the authors of the Gospels and the

Psalms. All wrote many centuries before Heaven permitted the invention of Printing. All had a sufficient audience, and what more was required?

People who deserve to be able to read, did read, and now that every one can read, few people deserve to do so, for few go beyond a newspaper. It is but a small minority who even aspire to study a novel. What is the result? The result is that authors endeavour to reach that vast public which, in no age and in no country, has cared for the pleasures of literature. We hear it said of a book that it does not appeal to a man on an omnibus, or to a man lunching in a public-house. That condemns a book, therefore authors debase their wares, to captivate indolent women, and the man on the omnibus.

Bad books are multiplied, tares are deliberately sown, the good seed is choked,

the rare good books are lost among the weeds, like wheat obscured by flamboyant poppies.

The great and good men who supply many of the passages in this collection, were honestly thanking Heaven and good writers for good books. They were trying, also, to lure the public by praise, to partake of the pleasures of the literature which is excellent. The great public is not to be tempted, for, of all the arts, Literature is least to the general taste of the world.

"A book in a nook," *libellus in angulo*, was the desire of Thomas à Kempis: it is not the world's desire. True reading demands seclusion, leisure, freedom from the crowd; and the great world, in all classes, is "gregarious." It confesses that it "has not time to read." Its time is devoted to seeking crowds; even music, the play, pictures, can be enjoyed in a crowd. Not so

literature ; the reading man or woman is not, like the world, "gregarious."

We readers are a little flock, scattered sparsely about the land, some in London, several in Glasgow, two or three, perhaps, in such a thriving village as Dundee. We are not gregarious ; for the gregarious there are plays, operas, the Royal Academy, and lectures. The man or woman who reads is at the opposite pole from those who go to lectures. *They* never read, they expect to take literature in "through the pores," and among a crowd.

The Greeks were of a like mind. You do not come on praises of books, as you turn over the *exemplaria Graeca*. That famous people went to the play, went to Recitations, went to Lectures, but did not read books any more than does our general public. Their very word for reading meant, literally, "reading aloud." I don't remember any

Greek praises of reading (not aloud) before a very late age, but Cicero is eloquent on the topic: he is usually quoted on the pleasures of literary study.

The great students, Dean Farrar, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Hain Friswell, Bacon, and others cited in this work, remind me, when they praise books, of boys who are in the water, on a chilly day. "Come in, you fellows," they cry, "it's awfully jolly." They express themselves much more eloquently; they say charming things about literature. Books lighten anxiety; books convey counsel; books make dark days sunny; books instruct; books "have the key of the happy golden land," the Open Sesame of romance. The authors are our friends, who do not bore us. "My days among the dead are passed," cries Southey, "Around me I behold, Where e'er these casual eyes are cast, The mighty minds of old." It is all

very true, but the public, like Mr. Huckleberry Finn, "takes no stock in dead people," does not care a dime for the mighty minds of old. In fact, as we splash about in the sea of letters, and cry, "Come in, it's awfully jolly," the wise world goes bicycling, or has some beer, or talks of politics or society. The lady in Mr. Mallock's satire justly distrusts persons who talk about books: "it looks as if they did not know any people to talk about." We address an inattentive population. Mankind, as a rule, detests literature.

"What another damned great volume, always writing, writing, Mr. Gibbon," said a Royal Duke, very gracefully, to the author of *The Decline and Fall*. The Stuarts were reading men; even Charles, Prince of Wales over the water, was a bibliophile. James I. was a poet, James V. was no better, James VI. was a bookworm; Charles I. was

a collector ; James VII., in the opinion of Lord Wolseley and the Duke of Wellington, was the most lucid of writers on military subjects. Hence the unpopularity of the Stuarts. Now the House of Hanover (in the last century) exactly suited us Britons. George III., brought up as a kind of Jacobite, had literary tastes ; so had George IV. The Duke of Sussex, a friend of Cardinal York, was a book collector. Her late Majesty was herself an author. The *early* Georges did not read.

“ Another damned great volume, Mr. Gibbon ! ”, thus does the English world salute an author, to the present day. A reader has a kind of freemasonry, like an angler, which enables him to detect other readers everywhere. Thus I have found comrades among game-keepers and gillies, and viscountesses, and *grandes dames de par le monde*, who quote Donne at dinner parties.

Marquises are often bookish, and I have heard, at first hand, of an omnibus driver who read Plato in Mr. Jowett's translation. Soldiers read a good deal, not so actors, school-masters, or college dons, a race of men remarkable for ignorance outside of their speciality. Barristers "have no time to read." Judges read novels, reviewers read nothing. They have not time.

Do I blame my fellow creatures? In no wise, but I do not hope to convert them. They are naturally human; I am one of a small race of abnormal creatures, known to science as bookworms. From babyhood, almost, I was acquainted with the word "bookworm," and endured the contempt of mankind. "*My* days among the dead were passed," with Bruce and Wallace, the Fat Knight and Mercutio, Aladdin and Colonel Henry Esmond, the Baron of Smailholme and Michael Scott the wizard. Society reproved

and endeavoured to correct me. "Why did I not play with the other boys?" (at cricket I *did*, of course), and like Sir Walter I might have said, "You can't think how ignorant these boys are." This remark I repressed: it was the only priggish saying recorded of Scott, and was uttered about the age of five. But Society did not convert me from my taste (the chief pleasure of a long and laborious existence) nor shall I ever attempt to convert Society. We readers dwell apart:

"We are like children reared in shade
Within some old-world abbey wall,
Forgotten in a forest glade,
And secret from the eyes of all."

The world could not wag on if we were all bookworms. "Muscles make the man, Not mind, or that confounded intellect." Some persons are born to prefer existence at second hand, glorified in the dreams of poets, sages, romancers, wits. There is better company, for such people, in a shelf of books,

than at the Club, or at a rout, or in the public-house. It suits us better to hear Mr. Stevenson, or Montaigne, or Coleridge, or Hazlitt, than to listen to such talk as is common enough. It is a taste like another ; it cannot be taught or communicated ; you cannot preach or lecture men and women into a love of good letters. The world is fundamentally hostile to literature, in great part because the world is gregarious, and literature is a solitary pursuit. Much may be said against it, as unfitting men for life, though some of the greatest readers, Cicero, Napoleon, Scott, Macaulay, Mr. Gladstone, have been stirring personages. But there are plenty of people to carry on this business of life. Let us read unreprieved.

The spirit of these remarks I find rebuked, whenever I turn from literature to authorship, and study *The Author*. In that great commercial organ, amongst the most eloquent

remarks upon discount, I seem to find traces of optimism, traces of belief in a great literary public. I do not believe in any such thing, even if some novels at six shillings, find a market for 100,000 copies. Even that (considering how bad most of these books are, how ignorant, coarse, emphatic, and illiterate) is relatively a very small demand. Think of the millions of England, and think of how many of them buy a book, say of an author who is a man of genius, and "popular," Mr. Kipling or Mr. Stevenson. What a beggarly account! As for those who read Marlowe, or Montaigne, they are the tiniest of remnants.

The public hates to spend money on books. A correspondent, writing from a college in a populous part of the country, favoured me to-day with some useful remarks on a special subject which I had treated. He did so on the strength of reviews; it

would be long enough before the book in question came his way, he said, and he wrote from a College! He had not the least faith in the acquisition of a book by the library of his College. (After writing this, I learn that the "College" is *not* a college, but the tale is too good to be lost!) This is typical of the English attitude towards literature. In large public libraries with good endowments, if no minion is kept to cut the leaves open, hundreds of books, famous books, remain uncut. I have myself cut pages of a century old, and the book, in this instance, was a classic. Education has not increased, I believe it has diminished, the number of readers of anything more abstruse than the last novel whose author had noisy backers. Perhaps Education has not directly caused the diminution in the number of students. The increased facilities for gregarious hurry have helped, and the number of journals which tell people (often quite erroneously) just as

much about a book as will satisfy an easy curiosity, assist in keeping down literature. Circulating libraries lend their aid by "sitting tight," when a book is asked for, by not supplying it, and by waiting till the public have forgotten the subject. They do not need to wait long.

The indifference, or hostility, to reading, is human, natural, and has always existed. In many obvious ways, modern life aids and confirms the natural hostility and indifference. But we bookish beings are not actually persecuted, after our childhood is over. Penal laws on study are not passed and enforced. We are more happily situated than Catholics under Elizabeth, Presbyterians under Charles II., or Scottish Episcopalians under Queen Anne or George II. We are not even forbidden to proselytize, and to win sheep into our narrow fold. This collection of wise sayings on the pleasures of

letters may here and there convert a soul, though, as I have said, I conceive that we must be born to love books, and to inherit citizenship in the Republic of Letters. If so, the text will, at least, confirm a faith founded in grace, and bestowed freely on the elect of the Muses. This doctrine, then, is a kind of literary Calvinism. These are lost souls who read to be in the fashion, mere empty professors, sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. They waste their hypocrisy, for it is decidedly not in the fashion to be bookish, —or only in “the highest circles.”



The Pleasures of Bookland

SINCE honour from the honourer
proceeds,

How well do they deserve, that memorise
And leave in books for all posterities
The names of worthies, and their virtuous
deeds ;

When all their glory else, like water-weeds
Without their element, presently dies,
And all their greatness quite forgotten
lies,

And when and how they flourish no man
heeds ;

How poor remembrances are statues,
tombs,

And other monuments that men erect
To Princes, which remain in closed
rooms,

Where but a few behold them, in respect
Of books, that to the universal eye
Show how they lived ; the other where
they lie !

The
Memorise in
Books

SAMUEL
DANIEL
1775-1811

The Pleasures

The Peacefulness of Books

FREDERIC
HARRISON
1831

ONLY by a course of treatment shall we bring our minds to feel at peace with the grand, pure works of the world. Something we ought all to know of the masterpieces of antiquity, and of the other nations of Europe. To understand a great national poet, such as Dante, Calderon, Corneille, or Goethe, is to know other types of human civilisation in ways which a library of histories does not sufficiently teach. The great masterpieces of the world are thus, quite apart from the charm and solace they give us, the master instruments of a solid education.



The Wise Use of Books

FREDERIC
HARRISON
1831

A WISE education, and so judicious reading, should leave no great type of thought, no dominant phase of human nature, wholly a blank. Whether our reading be great or small, so far as it goes it should be general. If our lives admit of but a short space for reading, all the more reason that, so far as may be, it should remind us of the

vast expanse of human thought and the wonderful variety of human nature. To read, and yet so to read, that we see nothing but a corner of literature, the loose fringe, or flats and wastes of letters, and by reading only deepen our natural belief that this island is the hub of the universe, and the nineteenth century the only age worth notice—all this is really to call in the aid of books to thicken and harden our untaught prejudices. Be it imagination, memory, or reflection that we address—that is, in poetry, history, science, or philosophy—our first duty is to aim at knowing something at least of the best, at getting some definite idea of the mighty realm whose outer rim we are permitted to approach.



BUT words are things, and a small
drop of ink,
Falling, like dew, upon a thought,
produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps,
millions, think.

The Wise
Use of Books

LORD BYRON

The
Book-Lover

YOUTH renews itself again
When he takes the childish books
Out of their accustomed nooks,
Turning over, half in pain,
Half in pleasure, pages torn
By the childish fingers worn.

Love long buried wakes and pleads
While he touches one by one,
As in lingering benison,
Tales of old romantic deeds,
Passionate books that used to seem
Once the echo of his dream.

INA M.
STENNING

Far worlds open and disclose
All their secret charmed ways
When he reads of travel-days,
Eager-spirited he goes
Over countries new and old,
Through the books his fingers hold.

Life with fuller meaning stirs
As to other books he turns,
There a living message burns—
Selfless-souled philosophers
Mutely urge him on to win
Conquest over self and sin.

Not in quiet libraries
 Only shall he learn to live,
 He must suffer and forgive,
 He must comfort all that is
 Ignorant and sad, and share
 His own sunshine everywhere.

Reaching thus the inmost soul
 In the books great minds inspired,
 May he not, upheld, untired,
 Carry to a glorious goal
 Words that stand in ageless youth
 Sign-posts on the road of Truth ?

Copyright.



THE object of literature in education
 is to open the mind, to correct it,
 to refine it, to enable it to comprehend
 and digest its knowledge, to give it
 power over its own faculties, application,
 flexibility, method, critical exactness,
 sagacity, address, and expression. These
 are the objects of that intellectual per-
 fection which a literary education is
 destined to give.

The
 Book-Lover

The
 Permanency
 of Books

CARDINAL
 NEWMAN
 1801-1890

Books
Never-failing
Friends

MY days among the Dead are passed;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old ;
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe ;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

ROBERT
SOUTHEY
1774-1843

My thoughts are with the Dead ; with
I live in long-past years, [them
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead ; anon
My place with them will be.
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity ;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

THE scholar only knows how dear these silent yet eloquent companions of pure thoughts and innocent hours become in the season of adversity. When all that is worldly turns to dross around us, these only retain their steady value. When friends grow cold, and the converse of intimates languishes into vapid civility and commonplace, these only continue the unaltered countenances of happier days, and cheer us with that true friendship which never deceived hope nor deserted sorrow.



BOOKS are a part of man's prerogative,

In formal ink they thoughts and voices hold,

That we to them our solitude may give,

And make time present travel that of old.

Our life fame pieceth longer at the end,

And books it farther backward to extend.

The
Companion=
ship of Books

WASHINGTON
IRVING
1783-1859

SIR T.
OVERBURY
1581-1613

The Love of
Books

GEORGE
WALKER
1772-1847

MY books are a treasure, more valued
by far
Than jewels protected by bolt and by bar;
Companions and counsellors, ready at
call,
They will stand by me still should I go
to the wall,
And most other pleasures forego.

For deny to the foxhunter leaping of
brooks;
Deny to the epicure dinner and cooks;
Deny to the fisher his nets, rods, and
hooks,
And deny to me then, Sir, my dearly-
loved books,
And you'll drive me half crazy with
woe.



AS a sky that has no constellations,
As a country unwatered by brooks,
As a house that is empty of kindred,
Unillumined by loving looks,
So dull is the life of the people
Who know not the blessing of books.

WITH unaffected gratitude I gaze
 Around upon those silent sons
 of thought,
 From time's far depths and far-off
 regions brought ;
 Ready with many tongues and lore and
 lays
 To minister to my capricious days !
 Chambers with golden sentences
 enwrought,
 They open liberal-hearted soon as
 sought,
 Nor claim nor heed my inefficient praise,
 Oh, kind companions ! my mentors
 true.
 My playmates, minstrels, mortal and
 divine !
 I think he would die happier who knew
 His thoughts deposited in some small
 shrine
 Like yours, should find a resting-place
 by you,
 There with undying light, though faint,
 to shine.

From "The Afterglow."



Books the
 Silent Sons
 of Thought

10	The Pleasures
<p data-bbox="156 275 275 366">Books are Silent Servants</p> <p data-bbox="163 887 265 977">B. W. PROCTER 1787-1874</p>	<p data-bbox="322 270 959 349">ALL round the room my silent servants wait,—</p> <p data-bbox="322 359 959 438">My friends in every season, bright and dim ;</p> <p data-bbox="322 448 648 488">Angels and seraphim</p> <p data-bbox="322 498 959 577">Come down and murmur to me, sweet and low,</p> <p data-bbox="322 588 938 666">And spirits of the skies all come and go Early and late ;</p> <p data-bbox="322 677 959 756">From the old world's divine and distant date,</p> <p data-bbox="322 766 689 806">From the sublimer few,</p> <p data-bbox="322 816 902 895">Down to the poet who but yester-eve Sang sweet and made us grieve,</p> <p data-bbox="322 905 938 945">All come, assembling here in order due.</p> <p data-bbox="322 955 938 1034">And here I dwell with Poesy, my mate, With Erato and all her vernal sighs,</p> <p data-bbox="322 1044 866 1085">Great Clio with her victories elate,</p> <p data-bbox="322 1095 928 1135">Or pale Urania's deep and starry eyes.</p> <p data-bbox="322 1145 959 1224">Oh friends, whom chance and change can never harm,</p> <p data-bbox="322 1234 959 1313">Whom Death the tyrant cannot doom to die,</p> <p data-bbox="322 1323 959 1402">Within whose folding soft eternal charm I love to lie,</p> <p data-bbox="322 1412 959 1491">And meditate upon your verse that flows, And fertilizes whereso'er it goes. . . .</p>

IF you want to know what any of the authors were who lived before our time, and are still objects of anxious inquiry, you have only to look into their works. But the dust and smoke and noise of modern literature have nothing in common with the pure, silent air of immortality.



WHEN in the west the sun is low
 I seek a quiet nook
 That in my study I have made,
 And take a favourite book :
 Then with my faithful friends around,
 In cloth and leather dressed,
 I travel thro' enchanted climes
 On many a wondrous quest.
 I see with them, great Caxton's days
 Far moved from stir and stress :
 I tread once more with lingering step
 The age of good Queen Bess ;
 And down the sweeping stream of time,
 This thought alone holds sway :
 That wisdom once enshrined in books
 Can never pass away.

The
 Immortality
 of Books

WILLIAM
 HAZLITT
 1778-1830

J. SHAYLOR
 1844

The Objects
of ReadingSIR ARTHUR
HELPS
1817-1875

WHAT are the objects men pursue in reading? They are these—amusement, instruction, a wish to appear well in society, and a desire to pass away time. Now even the lowest of these is facilitated by reading with method. The keenness of pursuit thus engendered enriches the most trifling gain, takes away the sense of dulness in details, and gives an interest to what would otherwise be most repugnant. No one who has never known the eager joy of some intellectual pursuit can understand the full pleasure of reading.

There is another view of reading which, though it is obvious enough, is seldom taken, I imagine, or at least acted upon; and that is, that in the course of our reading we should lay up in our minds a store of goodly thoughts in well-wrought words, which should be a living treasure of knowledge always with us, and from which, at various times and amidst all the shifting of circumstances, we might be sure of drawing some comfort, guidance, and sympathy. We see this

with regard to the sacred writings. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it!" But there is a similar comfort on a lower level, to be obtained from other sources than sacred ones. In any work that is worth carefully reading, there is generally something that is worth remembering accurately. A man whose mind is enriched with the best sayings of his own country, is a more independent man, walks the streets in a town, or the lanes in the country, with far more delight than he otherwise would have; and is taught by wise observers of man and nature, to examine for himself. Sancho Panza with his proverbs is a great deal better than he would have been without them; and I contend that a man has something in himself to meet troubles and difficulties, small or great, who has stored in his mind some of the best things which have been said about troubles and difficulties. Moreover, the loneliness of sorrow is thereby diminished.

.

There is a very refined use which

The Objects
of Reading

14	The Pleasures
<p data-bbox="135 290 277 349">The Objects of Reading</p> <p data-bbox="135 747 277 840">SIR ARTHUR HELPS 1817-1875</p> <p data-bbox="140 1414 267 1436">L. ALCOTT</p>	<p data-bbox="309 282 954 1290">reading is put to ; namely, to counteract the particular evils and temptations of our callings, the original imperfections of our characters, the tendencies of our age, or of our own time of life. Those, for instance, who are versed in dull, crabbed work all day, of a kind which is always exercising the logical faculty and demanding minute, not to say, vexatious criticism, would, during their leisure, do wisely to expatiate in writings of a large and imaginative nature. These, however, are often the persons who particularly avoid poetry and works of imagination, whereas they ought to cultivate them most. For it should be one of the frequent objects of every man who cares for the culture of his whole being, to give some exercise to those faculties which are not demanded by his daily occupation and not encouraged by his disposition.</p> <p data-bbox="612 1293 650 1332">✻</p> <p data-bbox="311 1362 951 1491">GOOD books, like good friends, are few and chosen ; the more select, the more enjoyable.</p>

BOOKS are the best type of the influence of the past. . . . The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him, life; it went out from him, truth. It came to him, short-lived actions; it went out from him, immortal thoughts. It came to him, business; it went from him, poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.



THE purest pleasures I have ever known are those accessible to you all; it is in the calm intercourse with intelligent minds, and in the communion with the departed great, through books, by our own firesides.

The
Influence of
Books

R. W.
EMERSON
1803-1882

R. COBDEN
1804-1865

Books not
Dead Things

JOHN MILTON
1608-1674

BOOKS are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth: and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. It is true, no age can restore a life, whereof, perhaps, there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the

worse. We should be wary, therefore, what persecution we raise against the living labours of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books.



THERE is a sort of busy worm
That will the fairest books deform,
By gnawing holes throughout them ;
Alike through every leaf they go,
Yet of its merits naught they know,
Nor care they aught about them.

Their tasteless tooth will tear and taint
The poet, patriot, sage, or saint,
Nor sparing wit nor learning ;
Now, if you'd know the reason why,
The best of reasons I'll supply—
'Tis bread to the poor vermin.

Of pepper, snuff, or 'bacca-smoke,
And russia-calf they make a joke.
Yet why should sons of science
These puny, rankling reptiles dread ?
'Tis but to let their books be read,
And bid the worms defiance.

Books not
Dead Things

The Life and
Death of the
Bookworm

I. F. M.
DOVASTON
1782-1854

Books the
Purest
Embodiment
of Thought

THOMAS
CARLYLE
1795-1881

ON all sides, are we not driven to the conclusion that, of the things which man can do or make here below, by far the most momentous, wonderful and worthy are the things we call Books ! Those poor bits of rag-paper with black ink on them ;—from the Daily Newspaper to the sacred Hebrew Book, what have they not done, what are they not doing !—For indeed, whatever be the outward form of the things (bits of paper, as we say, and black ink), is it not verily, at bottom, the highest act of man's faculty that produces a Book ? It is the *Thought* of man ; the true thaumaturgic virtue ; by which man works all things whatsoever. All that he does, and brings to pass, is the vesture of a Thought. This London City, with all its houses, palaces, steam-engines, cathedrals, and huge immeasurable traffic and tumult, what is it but a Thought, but millions of Thoughts made into One ;—a huge immeasurable Spirit of a THOUGHT, embodied in brick, iron, smoke, dust, Palaces, Parliaments, Hackney Coaches,

Katherine Docks, and the rest of it! Not a brick was made but some man had to *think* of the making of that brick.—The thing we called “bits of paper with traces of black ink,” is the *purest* embodiment a Thought of man can have. No wonder it is, in all ways, the activist and noblest.



READ not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. . . . Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. . . . Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.

Books the
Purest
Embodiment
of Thought

How to Read

FRANCIS
BACON,
LORD
VERULAM
1561-1626

The Pleasures

F. D.
MAURICE

IF books do not assist to make us better or more substantial men, they are only providing fuel for a fire larger and more utterly destructive than that which consumed the library of the Ptolemies.



Books the
Source of
Consolation

WILLIAM
DODD
1729-1777

O HAPPY be the day which gave
that mind

Learning's first tincture — blest thy
fostering care,

Thou most beloved of parents, worthiest
sire !

Which, taste-inspiring, made the lettered
page

My favourite companion : most esteemed,
And most improving ! Almost from the
day

Of earliest childhood to the present hour
Of gloomy, black misfortune, books, dear
books,

Have been, and are, my comforts. Morn
and night,

Adversity, prosperity, at home,
Abroad, health, sickness,—good or ill
report,

The same firm friends; the same
refreshment rich
And source of consolation. Nay, e'en
here
Their magic power they lose not; still
the same,
Of matchless influence in this prison-
house,
Unutterably horrid; in an hour
Of woe, beyond all fancy's fictions drear.



Books the
Source of
Consolation

“A BOOK in a nook,” *libellus in angulo*, was the desire of Thomas à Kempis: it is not the world's desire. True reading demands seclusion, leisure, freedom from the crowd; and the great world, in all classes, is “gregarious.” It confesses that it “has not time to read.” Its time is devoted to seeking crowds; even music, the play, pictures, can be enjoyed in a crowd. Not so literature; the reading man or woman is not, like the world, gregarious.

ANDREW
LANG
1844

The
Pleasures of
LiteratureRight Hon.
A. J. BALFOUR
1848

I AM deliberately of opinion that it is the pleasures and not the profits, spiritual or temporal, of literature which most require to be preached in the ear of the ordinary reader. I hold indeed the faith that all such pleasures minister to the development of much that is best in man, mental and moral; but the charm is broken and the object lost if the remote consequence is consciously pursued to the exclusion of the immediate end. It will not, I suppose, be denied that the beauties of nature are at least as well qualified to minister to our higher needs as are the beauties of literature. Yet we do not say we are going to walk to the top of such and such a hill in order to provide ourselves with "spiritual sustenance." We say we are going to look at the view. And I am convinced that this, which is the natural and simple way of considering literature as well as nature, is also the true way. The habit of always requiring some reward for knowledge beyond the knowledge itself, be that reward some material prize, or be it

what is vaguely called self-improvement, is one with which I confess I have little sympathy, fostered though it is by the whole system of our modern education. Do not suppose that I desire the impossible. I would not, if I could, destroy the examination system. But there are times, I admit, when I feel tempted somewhat to vary the prayer of the poet, and to ask whether Heaven has not reserved in pity to this much educating generation some peaceful desert of literature as yet unclaimed by the crammer or the coach, where it might be possible for the student to wander, even perhaps to stray, at his own pleasure, without finding every beauty labelled, every difficulty engineered, every nook surveyed, and a professional cicerone standing at every corner to guide each succeeding traveller along the same well-worn round. . . .

When I compare the position of the reader of to-day with that of his predecessor of the sixteenth century, I am amazed at the ingratitude of those who are tempted even for a moment to regret

The
Pleasures of
LiteratureRight Hon.
A. J. BALFOUR
1848

the invention of printing and the multiplication of books. There is now no mood of mind to which a man may not administer the appropriate nutriment or medicine at the cost of reaching down a volume from his book-shelf. In every department of knowledge infinitely more is known, and what is known is incomparably more accessible than it was to our ancestors. The lighter forms of literature, good, bad, and indifferent, which have added so vastly to the happiness of mankind, have increased beyond powers of computation ; nor do I believe that there is any reason to think that they have elbowed out their more serious and important brethren. It is perfectly possible for a man, not a professed student, and who only gives to reading the leisure hours of a business life, to acquire such a general knowledge of the laws of nature and the facts of history, that every great advance made in either department shall be to him both intelligible and interesting ; and he may besides have among his familiar friends many a

departed worthy whose memory is embalmed in the pages of memoir or biography. All this is ours for the asking. All this we shall ask for, if only it be our happy fortune to love for its own sake the beauty and the knowledge to be gathered from books. And if this be our fortune, the world may be kind or unkind—it may seem to us to be hastening on the wings of enlightenment and progress to an imminent millennium, or it may weigh us down with the sense of insoluble difficulty and irremediable wrong ; but whatever else it be, so long as we have good health and a good library, it can hardly be dull.



A TASTE for reading will always carry you into the best possible society, and enable you to converse with men who will instruct you by their wisdom and charm you by their wit ; who will soothe you when fretted, refresh you when weary, counsel you when perplexed, and sympathise with you at all times.

The
Pleasures of
Literature

G. S. HILLARD

The Delights
of Study

ROBERT
SOUTHEY
1774-1843

PRAISE to that Power who from my
earliest days,

Thus taught me what to seek and what
to shun ;

Who turn'd my footsteps from the
crowded ways,

Appointing me the better course to run
In solitude, with studious leisure blest,
The mind unfettered, and the heart at
rest.



Books
Legacies to
Mankind

JOSEPH
ADDISON
1672-1719

AS the Supreme Being has expressed,
and as it were printed His ideas in
the creation, men express their ideas in
books, which by this great invention of
these latter ages may last as long as the
sun and moon, and perish only in the
general wreck of nature.

There is no other method of fixing
those thoughts which arise and disappear
in the mind of man, and transmitting
them to the last periods of time; no
other method of giving a permanency to
our ideas, and preserving the knowledge
of any particular person, when his body
is mixed with the common mass of

matter, and his soul retired into the world of spirits. Books are the legacies that a great genius leaves to mankind, which are delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn.

All other arts of perpetuating our ideas continue but a short time.



FOR general improvement a man should read whatever his immediate inclination prompts him to, though to be sure, if a man has a science to learn he must regularly and resolutely advance. What we read with inclination makes a stronger impression. If we read without inclination half the mind is employed in fixing the attention, so that there is but half to be employed on what we read. I read Fielding's *Amelia* through without stopping. If a man begins to read in the middle of a book, and feels an inclination to go on, let him not quit it to go to the beginning. He may perhaps not feel again the inclination.

Books
Legacies to
Mankind

DR. SAMUEL
JOHNSON
1709-1784

How to Read
a Good Book

LORD
MORLEY
1838

KNOWLEDGE is worth little until you have made it so perfectly your own, as to be capable of reproducing it in precise and definite form. Goethe said that in the end we only retain of our studies, after all, what we practically employ of them. And it is at least well that in our serious studies we should have the possibility of practically turning them to a definite destination, clearly before our eyes. Nobody can be sure that he has got clear ideas on a subject, unless he has tried to put them down on a piece of paper in independent words of his own. It is an excellent plan, too, when you have read a good book, to sit down and write a short abstract of what you can remember of it. It is a still better plan, if you can make up your mind to a slight extra labour, to do what Lord Strafford, and Gibbon, and Daniel Webster did. After glancing over the title, subject, or design of a book, these eminent men would take a pen and write roughly what questions they expected to find answered in it, what difficulties

solved, what kind of information imparted. Such practices keep us from reading with the eye only, gliding vaguely over the page: and they help us to *place* our new acquisitions in relation with what we knew before. It is almost always worth while to read a thing twice over, to make sure that nothing has been missed or dropped on the way, or wrongly conceived or interpreted. And if the subject be serious, it is often well to let an interval elapse. Ideas, relations, statements of fact, are not to be taken by storm. We have to steep them in the mind, in the hope of thus extracting their inmost essence and significance. If one lets an interval pass, and then returns, it is surprising how clear and ripe that has become, which, when we left it, seemed crude, obscure, full of perplexity.

All this takes trouble, no doubt, but then it will not do to deal with ideas that we find in books or elsewhere as a certain bird does with its eggs—leave them in the sand for the sun to hatch and chance to rear. People who follow this plan

How to Read
a Good Book

30	The Pleasures
<p data-bbox="129 282 284 344">How to Read a Good Book</p> <p data-bbox="155 823 248 915">LORD MORLEY 1838</p>	<p data-bbox="310 282 953 688">possess nothing better than ideas half-hatched, and convictions reared by accident. They are like a man who should pace up and down the world in the delusion that he is clad in sumptuous robes of purple and velvet, when in truth he is only half-covered by the rags and tatters of other people's cast-off clothes.</p> <p data-bbox="310 705 953 1486">Apart from such mechanical devices as these I have mentioned, there are habits and customary attitudes of mind which a conscientious reader will practice, if he desires to get out of a book still greater benefits than the writer of it may have designed or thought of. For example, he should never be content with mere aggressive and negatory criticism of the page before him. The page may be open to such criticism, and in that case it is natural to indulge in it; but the reader will often find an unexpected profit by asking himself—what does this error teach me? How comes that fallacy to be here? How came the writer to fall into this defect of taste?</p>

To ask such questions gives a reader a far healthier tone of mind in the long run, more seriousness, more depth, more moderation of judgment, more insight into other men's ways of thinking as well as into his own, than any amount of impatient condemnation and hasty denial, even when both condemnation and denial may be in their place.



THE great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have laboured to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light.

How to Read
a Good Book

The Power
of Culture

MATTHEW
ARNOLD
1822-1889

The Joy of
Reading

O H ! for a book, and a cosy nook,
And oh ! for a quiet hour,
When care and strife and worry of life,
Have lost their dreaded power,
When you read with zest the very best
That mind to mind can give,
And quaff your joy without alloy,
And feel it is good to live.

A. W. M.

But oh ! for those for whom repose
Is all that life can bring,
For whom no bright essayists write,
No fervid poets sing,
For whom no deep philosopher
His subtle thoughts conceive,
Nor potent spells in fancy's cells
The gay romancers weave.

Then let your heart with pity smart
For those whom books ne'er please,
Who fain must lie with dimming eye,
Wasted by fell disease.
And seek your book, and cosy nook,
With gratitude indeed,
Right glad that still, both mind and will,
Are yours to muse and read.

CULTIVATE above all things a taste for reading. There is no pleasure so cheap, so innocent, and so remunerative as the real, hearty pleasure and taste for reading. It does not come to every one naturally. Some people take to it naturally, and others do not ; but I advise you to cultivate it, and endeavour to promote it in your minds. In order to do that you should read what amuses you and pleases you. You should not begin with difficult works, because, if you do, you will find the pursuit dry and tiresome. I would even say to you, read novels, read frivolous books, read anything that will amuse you and give you a taste for reading. On this point all persons could put themselves on an equality. Some persons would say they would rather spend their time in society ; but it must be remembered that if they had cultivated a taste for reading beforehand they would be in a position to choose their society, whereas, if they had not, the probabilities were that they would have to mix with people inferior to themselves.

Cultivate a
Taste for
Reading

LORD
SHERBROOKE
1811-1892

Friends and
Books

BEN JONSON
1573-1637

WHEN I would know thee Goodyere,
my thought looks
Upon thy well-made choice of friends
and books ;
Then do I love thee, and behold thy ends
In making thy friends books, and thy
books friends ;
Now I must give thy life and deed, the
voice
Attending such a study, such a choice ;
Where, though't be love that to thy
praise doth move,
It was a knowledge that begat that love.



The Power
in Books

ALEXANDER
SMITH
1830-1867

BOOKS written when the soul is at
spring-tide,
When it is laden like a groaning sky
Before a thunder-storm, are power and
gladness,
And majesty and beauty. They seize
the reader
As tempests seize a ship, and bear him on
With a wild joy. Some books are
drenchèd sands,
On which a great soul's wealth lies all in
heaps,

Like a wrecked argosy. What power in
books!

They mingle gloom and splendour, as
I've oft,

In thunderous sunsets, seen the thunder-
piles

Seamed with dull fire and fiercest glory-
rents.

They awe me to my knees, as if I stood
In presence of a king. They give me
tears;

Such glorious tears as Eve's fair
daughters shed,

When first they clasped a Son of God,
all bright

With burning plumes and splendours of
the sky,

In zoning Heaven of their milky arms.

How few read books aright! Most souls
are shut

By sense from grandeur, as a man who
snores

Night-capped and wrapt in blankets to
the nose

Is shut out from the night, which, like a
sea,

Breaketh for ever on a strand of stars.

The Power
of Books

JEAN PAUL
RICHTER

BOOKS are the most discreet of friends, they visit us without intrusion, and though often rudely put aside, are as prompt to serve and please as ever.



DOUGLAS
JERROLD

A BLESSED companion is a book. A book fitly chosen is a life-long friend.



The
Pleasures of
the Mind

G. CRABBE
1754-1832

BOOKS cannot always please, however good ;

Minds are not ever craving for their food ;
But sleep will soon the weary soul
prepare

For cares to-morrow that were this day's
care ;

For forms, for feasts, that sundry times
have past,

And formal feasts that will for ever last.

“ But then from study will no comforts
rise ? ”—

Yes ! such as studious minds alone can
prize ;

Comforts, yea !—joys ineffable they find,

Who seek the prouder pleasures of the
mind :

The soul, collected in those happy hours,
Then makes her efforts, then enjoys her
powers ;

And in those seasons feels herself repaid,
For labours passed and honours long
delay'd.

No! 'tis not worldly gain, although by
chance

The sons of learning may to wealth
advance ;

Nor station high, though in some favour-
ing hour

The sons of learning may arrive at
power ;

Nor is it glory, though the public voice
Of honest praise will make the heart
rejoice :

But 'tis the mind's own feelings give the
joy,

Pleasures she gathers in her own
employ—

Pleasures that gain or praise cannot
bestow,

Yet can dilate and raise them when they
flow.

Fashion in
ReadingWILLIAM
HAZLITT
1778-1830

THERE is a fashion in reading as well as in dress, which lasts only for the season. One would imagine that books were, like women, the worse for being old ; that they have a pleasure in being read for the first time ; that they open their leaves more cordially ; that the spirit of enjoyment wears out with the spirit of novelty ; and that, after a certain age, it is high time to put them on the shelf. This conceit seems to be followed up in practice. What is it to me that another — that hundreds or thousands have in all ages read a book ? Is it on this account the less likely to give me pleasure, because it has delighted so many others ? Or can I taste this pleasure by proxy ? Or am I in any degree the wiser for their knowledge ? Yet this might appear to be the inference.

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Oh, delightful ! To cut open the leaves, to inhale the fragrance of the scarcely dry paper, to examine the type to see who is the printer (which is some clue to the value that is set upon the

work), to launch out into regions of thought and invention never trod till now, and to explore characters that never met a human eye before—this is a luxury worth sacrificing a dinner-party, or a few hours of a spare morning to. Who, indeed, when the work is critical and full of expectation, would venture to dine out, or to face a coterie of blue stockings in the evening, without having gone through this ordeal, or at least without hastily turning over a few of the first pages, while dressing, to be able to say that the beginning does not promise much, or to tell the name of the heroine?

A new work is something in our power; we mount the bench, and sit in judgment on it.



TO divert at any time a troublesome fancy, run to thy books; they presently fix thee to them, and drive the other out of thy thoughts. They always receive thee with the same kindness.

Fashion in
Reading

THOMAS
FULLER

Sweet Swan
of
Hvon

BEN JONSON
1573-1637

TRIUMPH, my Britain ! Thou hast
one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage
owe.

He was not of an age, but for all time !
And all the Muses still were in their
prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to
warm

Our ears, or, like a Mercury, to charm.
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joyed to wear the dressing of his
lines,

Which were so richly spun, and woven
so fit

As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.
The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not
please ;

But antiquated and deserted lie,
As they were not of Nature's family.

Yet must I not give Nature all ! Thy art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a
part.

For though the Poet's matter Nature be

His art doth give the fashion. And
that he

Who casts to write a living line, must
sweat

(Such as thine are), and strike the second
heat

Upon the Muses' anvil, turn the same
(And himself with it), that he thinks to
frame ;

Or for the laurel he may gain a scorn !

For a good Poet's made as well as born ;

And such wert thou ! Look how the
father's face

Lives in his issue ; even so, the race

Of Shakespeare's mind and manners
brightly shines

In his well-turnèd and true-filèd lines ;

In each of which he seems to shake a
lance

As brandished at the eyes of Ignorance.

Sweet Swan of Avon ! what a sight it
were

To see thee in our water yet appear,

And make those flights upon the banks
of Thames

That so did take Eliza, and our James !

Sweet Swan
of
Avon

Reading and
Thinking

DR. THOMAS
ARNOLD
1795-1842

AN inquiring spirit is not a presumptuous one, but the very contrary. He whose whole recorded life was intended to be our perfect example is described as gaining instruction in the Temple by hearing and asking questions; the one is almost useless without the other. We should ask questions of our book and of ourselves; what is its purpose; by what means it proceeds to effect that purpose; whether we fully understand the one, and go along with the other? Do the arguments satisfy us; do the descriptions convey lively and distinct images to us; do we understand all the allusions to persons or things? In short, do our minds act over again from the writer's guidance what His acted before; do we reason as He reasoned, conceive as He conceived, think and feel as He thought and felt; or, if not, can we discern where and how far we do not, and can we tell why we do not?



I STILL retain my thirst for knowledge; my passion for holding converse with the greatest minds of all ages and nations; my power of forgetting what surrounds me, of living with the past, the future, and the unreal. Books are becoming everything to me. If I had at this moment my choice of life, I would bury myself in one of those immense libraries that we saw together at the universities, and would never pass a waking hour without a book before me.



OH, happy he who weary of the sound
Of throbbing life, can shut his
study door,

Like Heinsius, on it all, to find a store
Of peace that otherwise is never
found!

Such happiness is mine, when all around
My dear dumb friends in groups of
three or four

Command my soul to linger on the shore
Of those fair realms where they reign
monarchs crowned.

The Thirst
for Books

LORD
MACAULAY
1800-1859

J. WILLIAMS

On
Shakespeare,
1630

JOHN MILTON
1608-1674

WHAT needs my Shakespeare for
his honoured bones

The labour of an age in piled stones,
Or that his hallowed reliques should be
hid

Under a starry-pointing pyramid?
Dear Son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of
thy name?

Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
For whilst to the shame of slow-
endeavouring art

Thy easy numbers flow, and that each
heart

Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued
book

Those Delphic lines with deep impression
took,

Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much
conceiving;

And so sepulchred in such pomp dost
lie,

That kings for such a tomb would wish
to die.

WHOEVER converses much among the old books will be something hard to please among the new ; yet these must have their part, too, in the leisure of an idle man, and have, many of them, their beauties as well as their defaults. Those of story, or relations of matter of fact, have a value from their substance as much as from their form, and the variety of events is seldom without entertainment or instruction, how indifferently soever the tale is told. Other sorts of writings have little of esteem but what they receive from the wit, learning, or genius of the authors, and are seldom met with of any excellency, because they do but trace over the paths that have been beaten by the ancients, or comment, critic, and flourish upon them, and are at best but copies after those originals, unless upon subjects never touched by them, such as are all that relate to the different constitutions of religions, laws, or governments in several countries, with all matters of controversy that arise upon them.

The Old
Books and
the New

SIR W.
TEMPLE
1555-1627

Old Books
should be
Re-read

MARK
PATTISON
1813-1884

THOSE who most read books don't want to talk about them. The conversation of the man who reads to any purpose will be flavoured by his reading ; but it will not be about his reading. The people who read in order to talk about it, are people who read the books of the season because they are the fashion—books which come in with the season and go out with it. " In literature, I am fond of confining myself to the best company, which consists chiefly of my old acquaintance with whom I am desirous of becoming more intimate. I suspect that nine times out of ten it is more profitable, if not more agreeable, to read an old book over again than to read a new one for the first time. . . . Is it not better to try to elevate and endow one's mind by the constant study and contemplation of the great models, than merely to know of one's own knowledge that such a book is not worth reading ? "



TO-DAY the smallest coin of the realm will suffice to procure copies of the masterpieces of thought and composition, and the humblest and the poorest individual can summon to his companionship the kings of thought, the master minds of the world. . . .

The cold crust of class and personal selfishness is penetrated by these roots of intellectual fellowship in the commonwealth of letters, and a tide has set in which, with increasing volume, is drawing men from every class of occupation into a co-operative sympathetic understanding with each other for the advancement and diffusion of learning.



BOOKS are not made for furniture, but there is nothing else that so beautifully furnishes a house. The plainest row of books that cloth or paper ever covered is more significant of refinement than the most elaborately carved sideboard. Give us a house furnished with books rather than furniture.

The
Universality
of Literature

HON. T. F.
BAYARD
1828-1898

HENRY WARD
BEECHER

On the
Choice of
Books

REV. J. R.
MILLER

ON what principal do most persons choose the books they read? Is there one in a hundred who ever gives a serious thought to the question, or makes any intelligent choice whatever? With many it is "the latest novel," utterly regardless of what it is. With others it is any book that is talked about or extensively advertised. We live in a time when the trivial is glorified and held up in the blaze of sensation so as to attract the multitude, and sell. That is all many books are made for—to sell. They are written for money. There is no soul in them. There was no high motive, no thought of doing good to any one, of inspiring higher impulses, of adding to the world's joy, comfort, or knowledge. They were made to sell, and to sell they must appeal to the taste of the day, or, in other words, to the desire for sensation, excitement, and diversion. So the country is flooded with worthless literature, whilst really good and valuable books are unsold and unread. The multitude devour ephemeral

tales, weekly literary papers, society gossip, magazines, and the many new and trivial works that please or excite for a day, and are then forgotten. There are great books enough to occupy us during all our short and busy years; and if we are wise, we shall resolutely avoid all but the richest and the best.



HOW I pity those who have no love of reading, of study, or of the fine arts! I have passed my youth amidst amusements and in the most brilliant society; but I can assert with perfect truth, that I have never tasted pleasures so true as those I have found in the study of books, in writing, or in music. The days that succeed brilliant entertainments are always melancholy, but those which follow days of study are delicious; we have gained something; we have acquired some new knowledge, and we recall the past days not only without disgust and without regret, but with consummate satisfaction.

On the Choice
of Books

The
Satisfaction
of Literature

MADAME
DE GENLIS
1746-1830

The
Teaching of
Books

J. SHAYLOR
1844

WITHIN my humble library I dwell
an honoured guest,
Around me all the thoughts of those who
long have gone to rest,
And who, in brilliant prose or verse have
played their busy part
And deeply graved their names upon
the tablets of each heart.
When seeking rest and quietude old
books my thoughts delight.
I see once more King Arthur's plume
shoot headlong thro' the fight ;
I sail with Drake to golden lands set
shimmering in the sea,
I drink my fill of fairy songs and elfin
minstrelsy !
Between the volumes on my shelves no
jealousy is known,
For each one has a part to play, a mission
of its own.
They give their best to all who seek, and
ask no dole or wage,
Which wholesome lesson we can learn
from every printed page.

IF thou survive my well-contented day,
 When that churl Death my bones
 with dust shall cover,
 And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
 These poor rude lines of thy deceased
 lover,
 Compare them with the bettering of the
 time,
 And though they be outstripped by every
 pen,
 Reserve them for my love, not for their
 rime,
 Exceeded by the height of happier men.
 O! then vouchsafe me but this loving
 thought :
 " Had my friend's Muse grown with this
 growing age,
 A dearer birth than this his love had
 brought,
 To march in ranks of better equipage :
 But since he died, and poets better
 prove,
 Theirs for their style I'll read, his for
 love."

Sonnet

SHAKESPEARE
 1564-1616

The
Universality
of Books

LORD
AVEBURY
1834

WE may sit in our library and yet be in all quarters of the earth. We may travel round the world with Captain Cook or Darwin, with Kingsley or Ruskin, who will show us much more perhaps than ever we should see for ourselves. The world itself has no limits for us; Humboldt and Herschel will carry us far away to the mysterious nebulæ, far beyond the sun and even the stars; time has no more bounds than space; history stretches out behind us, and geology will carry us back for millions of years before the creation of man, even to the origin of the material Universe itself. We are not limited even to one plane of thought. Aristotle and Plato will transport us into a sphere none the less delightful because it requires some training to appreciate it. We may make a library, if we do but rightly use it, a true paradise on earth, a garden of Eden without its one drawback, for all is open to us, including and especially the fruit of the tree of knowledge for which we are told that our first

mother sacrificed all the rest. Here we may read the most important histories, the most exciting volumes of travels and adventures, the most interesting stories, the most beautiful poems; we may meet the most eminent statesmen and poets and philosophers, benefit by the ideas of the greatest thinkers, and enjoy all the greatest creations of human genius.



THERE is a choice in books as in friends, and the mind sinks or rises to the level of its habitual society—is subdued, as Shakespeare says of the dyer's hand, to what it works in. Cato's advice: "Counsel with the good," is quite as true if we extend it to books, for they, too, insensibly give away their own nature to the mind that converses with them. They either beckon upward or drag down. And it is certainly true that the material of thought reacts upon the thought itself.

The
Universality
of Books

Books the
Best
Companions

JAMES
RUSSELL
LOWELL
1819-1891

Books are
True
Levellers

DR. W. E.
CHANNING
1780-1842

IT is chiefly through books that we enjoy intercourse with superior minds, and these invaluable means of communication are in the reach of all. In the best books, great men talk to us, give us their most precious thoughts, and pour their souls into ours. God be thanked for books ! They are the voices of the distant and the dead, and make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages. Books are the true levellers. They give to all who will faithfully use them, the society, the spiritual presence of the best and greatest of our race. No matter how poor I am ; no matter though the prosperous of my own time will not enter my obscure dwelling ; if the sacred writers will enter and take up their abode under my roof—if Milton will cross my threshold to sing to me of Paradise ; and Shakespeare to open to me the worlds of imagination and the workings of the human heart ; and Franklin to enrich me with his practical wisdom—I shall not pine for want of intellectual companionship, and I may become a culti-

vated man, though excluded from what is called the best society in the place where I live.

To make this means of culture effectual, a man must select good books, such as have been written by right-minded and strong-minded men, real thinkers; who, instead of diluting by repetition what others say, have something to say for themselves, and write to give relief to full earnest souls: and these works must not be skimmed over for amusement, but read with fixed attention, and a reverential love of truth.



AH! well I love these books of mine,
That stand so trimly on their
shelves,

With here and there a broken line
(Fat 'quartos' jostling modest
'twelves')

A curious company I own;
The poorest ranking with their betters,
In brief—a thing almost unknown,
A pure Democracy of Letters.

Books are
True
Levellers

My Own Old
Books

JOHN G.
SAXE
1816-1887

A Taste for
Books and
Reading

SIR J.
HERSCHEL
1792-1871

WERE I to pray for a taste which should stand me in stead under every variety of circumstances, and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me during life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss, and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading. Give a man this taste and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making him a happy man ; unless, indeed, you put into his hands a most perverse selection of books. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history, with the wisest, the wittiest, the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity. You make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages.



PLUTARCH

WE ought to regard books as we do sweetmeats—not wholly to aim at the pleasantest, but chiefly to respect the wholesomest ; not forbidding either, but approving the latter most.

BOOKS are the *negative* pictures of thought, and the more sensitive the mind that receives their images, the more nicely the finest lines are reproduced. . . . A scholar must shape his own shell, *secrete* it, for secretion is only separation, you know, of certain elements derived from the materials of the world about us. And a scholar's study is his shell. . . . Of course I must have my literary *harem*, my *parc aux cerfs*, where my favourites await my moments of leisure and pleasure,—my scarce and precious editions, my luxurious typographical masterpieces; my Delilahs, that take my head in their lap; secret treasures that nobody else knows anything about; books, in short, that I like for insufficient reasons, it may be, but peremptorily, and mean to like and to love and to cherish till death do us part.



WISE books,

For half the truths they hold are
honoured tombs.

The Leisure
and Pleasure
of Books

DR. O. W.
HOLMES
1809-1894

GEORGE
ELIOT

Books Great
Equalizers

LORD
BEACONS-
FIELD
1804-1881

A MAN who knows nothing but the history of the passing hour, who knows nothing of the history of the past, but that a certain person whose brain was as vacant as his own occupied the same house as himself, who in a moment of despondency or of gloom has no hope in the morrow because he has read nothing that has taught him that the morrow has any changes—that man, compared with him who has read the most ordinary abridgment of history, or the most common philosophical speculation, is as distinct and different an animal as if he had fallen from some other planet, was influenced by a different organization, working for a different end, and hoping for a different result. It is knowledge that equalizes the social condition of man—that gives to all, however different, their political position, passions which are in common, and enjoyments which are universal. Knowledge is like the mystic ladder in the patriarch's dream. Its base rests on the primeval earth—its crest is lost in the

shadowy splendour of the empyrean ;
while the great authors who for tradi-
tionary ages have held the chain of
science and philosophy, of poesy and
erudition, are the angels ascending and
descending the sacred scale, and main-
taining, as it were, the communication
between man and heaven.



BOOKS that keep alive the ages
On my shelves abide in peace,
Truth enshrined within their pages,
Waiting for a full release ;
Not alone in one tome dwelling,
But in all, perchance a gleam
In the dark, some dark dispelling
Of humanity's strange dream.
Old true friends in welcome places
Greet me in each varying mood,
And new friends with fresh young faces
Woo with keen solicitude ;
Ancient discords merging slowly
Into one harmonious whole,
Time absorbing high or lowly
In the majesty of soul.

Books Great
Equalizers

The
Peacefulness
of Books

EDWARD
FOSKETT

The Power
of Literature

LORD
MACAULAY
1800-1859

FILL your glasses to the Literature of Britain; to that literature the brightest, the purest, the most durable of all the glories of our country; to that literature so rich in precious truth and precious fiction; to that literature which boasts of the prince of all poets and of the prince of all philosophers; to that literature which has exercised an influence wider than that of our commerce, and mightier than that of our arms; to that literature which has taught France the principles of liberty, and has furnished Germany with models of art; to that literature which forms a tie closer than the ties of consanguinity between us and the commonwealths of the valley of the Mississippi; to that literature before the light of which impious and cruel superstitions are fast taking flight on the banks of the Ganges; to that literature which will, in future ages, instruct and delight the unborn millions who will have turned the Australasian and Caffrarian deserts into cities and gardens. To the Literature of Britain,

then! And wherever British literature
spreads, may it be attended by British
virtue and by British freedom!



BOOKS! sweet associates of the
silent hour,

What blessed aspirations do I owe
To your companionship—your peaceful
power,

High and pure pleasure ever can
bestow,
Of noble ones I trace the path through
life,

Joys in their joys, and sorrow as they
mourn ;

Gaze on their christian animating strife,
And shed some fond tears o'er their
untimely urn ;

Or with heroic beings tread the soil
Of a free country, by themselves made
free,

And taste the recompense of virtuous
toil,

The exaltation of humanity.

The
Power of
Literature

The
Association
of Books

F.
HORNBLLOWER

The
Cultivation of
ReadingLORD MAHON
1791-1875

THE pleasures of reading deserve most careful cultivation. Other objects which we have in this world, other pleasures which we seek to pursue, depend materially on other circumstances, on the opinion or caprice of others, on the flourishing or depressed state of an interest or a profession, on connections, on friends, on opportunities, on the prevalence of one party or the other in the State. Thus, then, it happens, that without any fault of ours, with regard to objects dear to us, we may be constantly doomed to disappointment. In the pleasure of reading, on the other hand, see how much is at all times within your own power; how little you depend upon any one but yourself. . . . See how little the man who can rely on the pleasures of reading is dependent on the caprice or will of his fellow-men. See how much there is within his own power and control;—how by reading, if his circumstances have been thwarted by any of the fortuitous events to which I have just

referred, how often it is in his power, by these very studies, to better his condition ; or, failing in that, how many hours he has in which to obtain oblivion from it, when communing with the great and good of other days. Surely, then, all those who feel—and who does not?—the variety and the vicissitudes of human life, ought, on that very account, if they be wise, to cultivate in themselves, and also to promote in others, an enlightened taste for reading. Of the pleasures of reading I will say, that there is no man so high as to be enabled to dispense with them ; and no man so humble who should be compelled to forego them. Rely upon it, that in the highest fortune and the highest station, hours of lassitude and weariness will intrude, unless they be cheered by intellectual occupation. Rely on it, also, that there is no life more toilsome, so devoted to the cares of this world, and to the necessity of providing the daily bread, but what it will afford intervals (if they be only sought out) in which intellectual plea-

The
Cultivation of
Reading

sures may be cultivated and oblivion of other cares enjoyed. Depend upon it that these are pleasures, which he who condemns will find himself a miserable loser in the end.



The
Permanency
of Books

ERASMUS
DARWIN
1731-1802

PAPYRA, throned upon the banks of Nile,
Spread her smooth leaf and waved her silver style.

The storied pyramid, the laurelled bust,
The trophied arch had crumbled into dust ;

The sacred symbol, and the epic song
(Unknown the character, forgot the tongue).

With each unconquered chief, or sainted maid,

Sunk undistinguished in Oblivion's shade,

Till to astonished realms Papyrus taught
To paint in mystic colours sound and thought,

With Wisdom's voice to print the page sublime,

And mark in adamant the steps of Time.

THE best education in the world is that which we insensibly acquire from conversation with our intellectual superiors. . . . In learning to know other things and other minds we become more intimately acquainted with ourselves, and are to ourselves better worth knowing. In our own nature as it expands we find a sweeter and less selfish companionship. All that we have read and learned, all that has occupied and interested us in the thoughts and deeds of men, abler or wiser than ourselves, constitutes at last a spiritual society, of which we can never be deprived, for it rests in the heart and soul of the man who has acquired it.



BOOKS are the friends of the friendless, and a library is the home of the homeless. A taste for reading will always carry you into the best possible society, and enable you to converse with men who will instruct you by their wisdom, and charm you by their wit.

The
Cultivation
of the
Intellect

LORD LYTTON
(*Owen
Meredith*)
1831-1891

G. S. HILLARD

The Culture
of Books.

DR. W. E.
CHANNING
1708-1842

BOOKS, once confined to a few by their costliness, are now accessible to the multitude; and in this way a change of habits is going on in society, highly favourable to the culture of the people. Instead of depending on casual rumour and loose conversation for most of their knowledge and objects of thought; instead of forming their judgements in crowds, and receiving their chief excitement from the voice of neighbours; men are now learning to study and reflect alone, to follow out subjects continuously, to determine for themselves what shall engage their minds, and to call to their aid the knowledge, original views, and reasonings of men of all countries and ages; and the results must be, a deliberateness and independence of judgement, and a thoroughness and extent of information unknown in former times. The diffusion of these silent teachers, books, through the whole community, is to work greater effects than artillery, machinery, and legislation. Its peaceful

agency is to supersede stormy revolutions. The culture, which is to spread, whilst an unspeakable good to the individual, is also to become the stability of nations.



BOOKS are not seldom talismans and spells,

By which the magic arts of shrewder wits

Holds an unthinking multitude enthralled,

Some to the fascination of a name

Surrender judgment, hoodwinked. Some the style

Infatuates, and through labyrinths and wilds

Of error leads them by a tune entranced,

While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear

The insupportable fatigue of thought,

And swallowing, therefore, without pause or choice,

The total grist unsifted, husks and all.

The Culture
of Books

The Varied
Power
of Books

WILLIAM
COWPER
1731-1800

The
Enjoyment
of Books

SOME ask for a pipe and an easy
chair,

And say they are never so happy as
there ;

Some ask for a gun and a mountain glen,
And say they are never so happy as
then :

While some, that true joy, will boldly
declare,

Can only be found when you fly through
the air.

A. W. M.

But give me a book and I straight forget
The worries and cares that my life beset.
With the traveller I'm lost in lands we
explore,

And when home again, I sigh for more :
I am thrilled with the hero of gay
romance,

And the poet's fancy my joys enhance ;
I am stirred as historic paths I tread
With the noble deeds of the mighty
dead.

Yes ! though tempests rage and torrents
roar,

Give me a book and I ask no more.

BUT what strange art, what magic
can dispose

The troubled mind to change its native
woes ?

Or lead us willing from ourselves to see
Others more wretched, more undone
than we ?

This, Books can do ;—nor this alone,
they give

New views to life, and teach us how to
live ;

They sooth the grieved, the stubborn
they chastise,

Fools they admonish, and confirm the
wise ;

Their aid they yield to all ; they never
shun

The man of sorrow, nor the wretch un-
done ;

Unlike the hard, the selfish, and the
proud,

They fly not sullen from the suppliant
crowd ;

Nor tell to various people various things,
But show to subjects what they show
to kings.

The Power
of Books

GEORGE
CRABBE
1754-1832

ALEXANDER
SMITH
1830-1867

IN my garden I spend my days ; in my library I spend my nights. My interests are divided between my geraniums and my books. With the flower I am in the present ; with the book I am in the past. I go into my library, and all history unrolls before me. I breathe the morning air of the world while the scent of Eden's roses yet lingered in it, while it vibrated only to the world's first brood of nightingales, and to the laugh of Eve. I see the Pyramids building : I hear the shoutings of the armies of Alexander : I feel the ground shake beneath the march of Cambyses. I sit as in a theatre,—the stage is time, the play is the play of the world. What a spectacle it is ! What kingly pomp, what processions file past, what cities burn to heaven, what crowds of captives are dragged at the chariot-wheels of conquerors ! I hiss, or cry " Bravo," when the great actors come on the shaking stage.



BOOKS!—the chosen depositories of the thoughts, the opinions, and the aspirations of mighty intellects;—like wondrous mirrors that have caught and fixed bright images of souls that have passed away,—like magic lyres, whose masters have bequeathed them to the world, and which yet, of themselves, ring with unforgotten music, while the hands that touched their chords have crumbled into dust. Books!—they are the embodiments and manifestations of departed minds — the living organs through which those who are dead yet speak to us. Books!—they are the garnerers in which are stored the wisdom bought by toil and study—the gorgeous dreams of the poet, the maxims of the philosopher, the skilful delineations of the true observer, the histories of mighty deeds, the wonders of distant lands, the records of precious facts—the messengers which the wise and the good send to us, laden with treasures for every mental want, and precepts for every duty.

Books the
Depositories
of Mighty
Intellects

DR. CHAPIN
1814-1880

In Praise of
Books

MICHAEL
THE BISHOP
1250

AND as often as thou readest in this book, it will add knowledge to thy knowledge, and it will add gentleness to thy nature and charm to thy tongue. It will make thy character noble and thy discourse just, and it will give thee prosperity in all thy undertakings. That which thou couldst not learn of thyself in all the days of thy life thou mayest learn in a month from the lips of the wise. Thou mayest learn in peace, by work and by zeal, by standing at the door of those who have succeeded and by sitting at the feet of men of learning.

And this book is better than the heaping up of treasure, and its scent is sweeter than the loveliest perfumes, and it is good, and its voice is sincere. And this book will be at thy command in the night and in the day, and be with thee in thy travels. It will remain with thee and depart not from thee. When thou callest, it will hasten to come. A messenger it is who brings thee joy. It is a constant help when thou art in the path

of sorrow and ruin. It will add joy to thy joy, and it is a lightener of care for ever. And it gathers together for thee, so far as it can, that by which thou mayst help thyself in all the paths of thy sorrows, and it removes far from thee the pressure of thy grief, and the weariness of thy wakefulness and of thy sleep.

Call it to thee in the time of thy need, and it will hearken to thee when thou standest and when thou sittest. And trust in it in all thy actions. And hold it high for the day of thy rejoicing, for it is safer than wealth, and as a wife it is tender, and not like a harsh and unkind guardian.

It is a pleasant narrator of that which has been, and an agreeable teacher. It does not hinder the vigils of the night, it does not weary, and much use does not render it tedious. It will laugh with thee in the day of thy promise and weep with thee in the days of thy instruction. And it is an eloquent although a dumb and silent monitor.

If thou have not gained aught else

In Praise
of BooksMICHAEL
THE BISHOP
1250

from its preference, has it not kept thee from sitting with fools and from communing with the wicked? This book is a great inheritance for thee, and a shining glory, and a beloved brother, and a faithful servant, and a joy-bringing messenger. It is an increaser of intelligence for the intelligent.

This book is a justly prized teacher. It gives joy to those who companion with it, and confides its secrets to those who dwell in union with it, and there is no limit to that which it proclaims.

If thou approach it comes near, and if thou goest far away it makes no reproach. Call and it will answer. Although thou make much use of it this book will not reproach thee, but come ever at thy command and teach what is useful, and keep thee from the stain of blemish, and hold thee back from sin and demerit, and keep thee in all thy days. And it is a narrator of events for thee in the time of thy solitude, and it will keep thee from attempting that which thou canst not do, and will restrain thee

from disgraceful action. And it will save thee from heresy and apostasy and will guard thy tongue from offence.

In Praise
of Books

In meditation upon it, much time may be profitably spent, and it will help thee in many and heavy cares. This book contains the whole circle of that which is to be learned, and distant friends are united by its common study. He who makes it his own gains profit, and he who reads it is richer than his neighbour. For this book is the fragrant flower of the garden. There is an anecdote in the "Book of the Wise Philosophers" which breathes the same enthusiastic spirit: "Once upon a time a wise man came to a wise man as he was alone in his dwelling and said, 'O thou wise man, thou solitary in solitude.' And the other replied, 'I am not solitary, for I am with many wise men, and with whichever of them I desire to speak he will speak with me.'

"And he stretched forth his hand and brought many books out of a chest, whilst he said, 'Here Galen tells us the

76	The Pleasures
<p>In Praise of Books</p> <p>MICHAEL THE BISHOP 1250</p>	<p>truth and Hippocrates instructs, and Socrates teaches, and Plato discourses, and Aristotle testifies, and Aklandinos speaks in parables, and Hermes gives answers, and Porphyry exhorts, and Gregory discourses, and David teaches, and Paul preaches, and the Gospel proclaims the glad tidings. And whichever of these I desire will converse with me and I with him, and I have not the least uncertainty.' "</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✻</p>
<p>Books and Literature</p> <p>LORD MORLEY 1838</p>	<p>LITERATURE consists of all the books—and they are not so many—where moral truth and human passion are touched with a certain largeness, sanity, and attraction of form. My notion of the literary student is one who through books explores the strange voyages of men's moral reason, the impulses of the human heart, the chances and changes that have overtaken human ideals of virtue and happiness, of conduct and manners, and the shifting fortunes of great conceptions of truth and virtue.</p>

BOOKS, the oldest and the best, stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage. They have no cause of their own to plead, but while they enlighten and sustain the reader his common-sense will not refuse them. Their authors are natural and irresistible aristocracy in every society, and, more than kings or emperors, exert an influence on mankind. When the illiterate and perhaps scornful trader has earned by enterprise and industry his coveted leisure and independence, and is admitted to the circles of wealth and fashion, he turns inevitably at last to those still higher but yet inaccessible circles of intellect and genius, and is sensible only of the imperfection of his culture and the vanity and insufficiency of all his riches, and further proves his good sense by the pains which he takes to secure for his children that intellectual culture whose want he so keenly feels; and thus it is that he becomes the founder of a family.



The
Enlighten=
ment of
Books

H. D.
THOREAU
1817-1862

What Class
of Books to
Read

FREDERIC
HARRISON
1831

WHAT are the subjects, what are the class of books we are to read, in what order, with what connection, to what ultimate use or object? Even those who are resolved to read better books are embarrassed by a field of choice practically boundless. The longest life, the greatest industry, joined to the most powerful memory, would not suffice to make us profit from a hundredth part of the world of books before us. If the great Newton said that he seemed to have been all his life gathering a few shells on the shore, whilst a boundless ocean of truth still lay beyond and unknown to him, how much more to each of us must the sea of literature be a pathless immensity beyond our powers of vision or of reach—an immensity in which industry itself is useless without judgment, method, discipline; where it is of infinite importance what we can learn and remember, and of utterly no importance what we may have once looked at or heard of. Alas! the most of our reading leaves as

little mark even in our own education as the foam that gathers round the keel of a passing boat! For myself, I am inclined to think the most useful help to reading is to know what we should not read, what we can keep out from that small cleared spot in the overgrown jungle of "information," the corner of which we can call our ordered patch of fruit-bearing knowledge. The incessant accumulation of fresh books must hinder any real knowledge of the old; for the multiplicity of volumes becomes a bar upon our use of any. In literature especially does it hold—that we cannot see the wood for the trees.

Books are no more education than laws are virtue. Of all men, perhaps, the Book-lover needs most to be reminded that man's business here is to *know* for the sake of living, *not* to live for the sake of knowing.



THE reading which has pleased, will please when repeated ten times.

What Class
of Books to
Read

HORACE

Books a
Blessing in
Youth and
Age

JEREMY
COLLIER
1650-1726

BOOKS are a Guide in Youth, and an Entertainment for Age. They support us under Solitude, and keep us from being a Burthen to ourselves. They help us to forget the Crossness of Men and Things; compose our Cares, and our Passions; and lay our Disappointments asleep. When we are weary of the Living, we may repair to the Dead, who have nothing of Peevishness, Pride, or Design, in their Conversation. However, to be constantly in the Wheel has neither Pleasure nor Improvement in it. A Man may as well expect to grow stronger by always Eating, as wiser by always Reading. Too much overcharges Nature, and turns more into Disease than Nourishment. 'Tis Thought and Digestion which make Books serviceable, and give Health and Vigour to the Mind. Neither ought we to be too Implicit or Resigning to Authorities, but to examine before we Assent, and preserve our Reason in its just Liberties. To walk always upon Crutches is the way to lose the use of

our Limbs. Such an absolute Submission keeps us in a perpetual Minority, breaks the Spirits of the Understanding, and lays us open to Imposture.

But Books well managed afford Direction and Discovery.



BOOKS! Books! Those precious burden bearers of the thought and wisdom of the world, how can humanity sufficiently laud their praise? To their powers the great minds of all ages have contributed, and in the fluctuating stream of time down which they have travelled, they have in their course inspired and stimulated nations to the lofty ideals of a nobler and better civilisation, and are now, as in the past, educating the sub-conscious brain and pointing it toward undeveloped possibilities. May they in the virility of their powers fertilize and bind together all nations and kindreds in that intellectual bond of harmony and peace to which the great minds of all time have aspired.

Books
a Blessing in
Youth and
Age

The Power
of Books

J. SHAYLOR
1844

The Mobility
of Books

JOHN RUSKIN
1819-1900

A COMMON book will often give you much amusement, but it is only a noble book which will give you dear friends. Remember also that it is of less importance to you in your earlier years, that the books you read should be clever than that they should be right. I do not mean oppressively or repulsively instructive ; but that the thoughts they express should be just, and the feelings they excite generous. It is not necessary for you to read the wittiest or the most suggestive books ; it is better, in general, to hear what is already known, and may be simply said. Much of the literature of the present day, though good to be read by persons of ripe age, has a tendency to agitate rather than confirm, and leaves its readers too frequently in a helpless or hopeless indignation, the worst possible state into which the mind of youth can be thrown. It may, indeed, become necessary for you, as you advance in life, to set your hand to things that need to be altered in the world, or apply your heart chiefly to

what must be pitied in it, or condemned ; but, for a young person, the safest temper is one of reverence, and the safest place one of obscurity. Certainly at present, and perhaps through all your life, your teachers are wisest when they make you content in quiet virtue, and that literature and art are best for you, which point out, in common life and familiar things, the objects for hopeful labour and for humble love.



A PRINCE without letters is a pilot without eyes. All his government is groping. In sovereignty it is a most happy thing not to be compelled ; but so it is the most miserable not to be counselled. And how can he be counselled that cannot see to read the best counsellors (which are books) ; for they neither flatter us nor hide from us ? He may hear, you will say ; but how shall he always be sure to hear truth ? or be counselled the best things, not the sweetest ?

The Nobility
of Books

Books Good
Counsellors

BEN JONSON
1573-1637

HON.
CAROLINE
NORTON
1808-1877

SILENT companions of the lonely
hour,
Friends who can never alter or forsake,
Who for inconstant roving have no
power,
And all neglect, perforce, must calmly
take,
Let me return to you, this turmoil ending,
Which worldly cares have in my spirit
wrought,
And, o'er your old familiar pages bending,
Refresh my mind with many a tranquil
thought ;
Till happily meeting there, from time to
time,
Fancies, the audible echo of my own,
'Twill be like hearing in a foreign clime
My native language spoken in friendly
tone,
And with a sort of welcome I shall dwell
On these, my unripe musings, told so
well.



MONTESQUIEU

LOVE of reading enables a man to
exchange the weary hours which
come to every one, for hours of delight.

BOOKS delight us when prosperity smiles upon us; they comfort us inseparably when stormy fortune frowns on us. They lend validity to human compacts, and no serious judgments are propounded without their help. Arts and sciences, all the advantages of which no mind can enumerate, consist in books. How highly must we estimate the wondrous power of books, since through them we survey the utmost bounds of the world and time, and contemplate the things that are, as well as those that are not, as it were in the mirror of eternity. In books we climb mountains and scan the deepest gulfs of the abyss; in books we behold the finny tribes that may not exist outside their native waters, distinguish the properties of streams and springs and of various lands; from books we dig out gems and metals, and the materials of every kind of mineral, and learn the virtues of herbs and trees and plants, and survey at will the whole progeny of Neptune, Ceres, and Pluto.

The Delight
of Books

RICHARD
DE BURY
1287-1345

The
Advantages
of Literature

LORD
GOSCHEN
1831-1907

HISTORY deals with the things of the past. They are *absent*, in a sense, from your minds—that is to say, you cannot see them ; but the study of history qualifies you and strengthens your capacity for understanding things that are not present to you, and thus I wish to recommend history to you as a most desirable course of study. Then, again, take geography, travels in foreign countries. Here, again, you have matters which are absent, in the physical sense, from you ; but the study of travels will enable you to realise things that are absent to your own minds. And as for the power of forming ideal pictures, there I refer you to poets, dramatists, and imaginative writers, to the great literature of all times and of all countries. Such studies as these will enable you to live, and to move, and to think, in a world different from the narrow world by which you are surrounded. These studies will open up to you sources of amusement which, I think I may say, will often rise into happiness. I wish

you, by the aid of the training which I recommend, to be able to look beyond your own lives, and have pleasure in surroundings different from those in which you move. I want you to be able—mark this point—to sympathise with other times, to be able to understand the men and women of other countries, and to have the intense enjoyment—an enjoyment which, I am sure, you would all appreciate—of mental change of scene. I do not only want you to know dry facts; I am not only looking to a knowledge of facts, nor chiefly to that knowledge. I want the heart to be stirred as well as the intellect. I want you to feel more and live more than you can do if you only know what surrounds yourselves. I want the action of the imagination, the sympathetic study of history and travels, the broad teaching of the poets, and, indeed of the best writers of other times and other countries, to neutralize and check the dwarfing influences of necessarily narrow careers and necessarily stunted lives.

Poetry in
Literature

WASHINGTON
IRVING
1783-1859

WITH the true poet everything is terse, touching, or brilliant. He gives the choicest thoughts in the choicest language. He illustrates them by everything that he sees most striking in nature and art. He enriches them by pictures of human life, such as it is passing before him. His writings, therefore, contain the spirit, the aroma, if I may use the phrase, of the age in which he lives. They are caskets which enclose within a small compass the wealth of the language—its family jewels, which are thus transmitted in a portable form to posterity. The setting may occasionally be antiquated, and require now and then to be renewed, as in the case of Chaucer ; but the brilliancy and intrinsic value of the gems continue unaltered. Cast a look back over the long reach of literary history. What vast valleys of dulness, filled with monkish legends and academical controversies ! what bogs of theological speculations ! what dreary wastes of metaphysics ! Here and there only do we behold the heaven-illuminated

bards, elevated like beacons on their widely separate heights, to transmit the pure light of poetical intelligence from age to age.



DELIGHT of childhood, as I once again

Turn thy loved leaves, how many a tender thought

And soft emotion rises, deeply fraught
With not displeasing pensiveness and pain !

Thou wak'st the first, and lo, a life-long train

Of recollections to my view are brought,
Of recollections that I oft have sought

'Mid the dark annals of the past, in vain.

Yes, Memory, I confess thy fond control !

All freshly colour'd by thy brightest ray !

Shades of departed joys fleet o'er my soul,

Fair as the clouds, that oft, at close of day,

O'er evening's melancholy bosom roll ;

Alas, as unsubstantial too, as they !

Poetry in
Literature

On Finding a
Long Lost
Book

C. H.
TOWNSHEND
1798-1868

The Reading
of Books

T. DUDLEY

IN literature I am fond of confining myself to the best company, which consists chiefly of my old acquaintances, with whom I am desirous of becoming more intimate; and I suspect that nine times out of ten it is more profitable, if not more agreeable, to read an old book over again than to read a new one for the first time.

CHARLES
DIBDIN

THE library of a good man is one of his most constant, cheerful, and instructive companions; and as it has delighted him in youth, so will it solace him in old age.



S. PALMER

OF all things sold books are incomparably the cheapest; of all pleasures the least palling.

PAGAN
WISDOM

THE learned man's country is every country, and each town his town. Why, then, do men remain ignorant?

MANY, many a dreary, weary hour have I got over—many a gloomy misgiving postponed—many a mental or bodily annoyance forgotten, by help of the tragedies and comedies of our dramatists and novelists ! Many a trouble has been soothed by the still small voice of the moral philosopher—many a dragon-like care charmed to sleep by the sweet song of the poet ; for all which I cry incessantly, not aloud, but in my heart, thanks and honour to the glorious masters of the pen, and the great inventors of the press !



THINK what a book is. It is a portion of the eternal mind, caught in its process through the world, stamped in an instant, and preserved for eternity. Think what it is ; that enormous amount of human sympathy and intelligence that is contained in these volumes ; and think what it is that this sympathy should be communicated to the masses of the people.

The Charm
of Books

THOMAS HOOD
1798-1845

LORD
HOUGHTON
1809-1885

Thoughts on
Books

ANTHONY
TROLLOPE
1815-1882

BOOK love, my friends, is your pass to the greatest, the purest, and the most perfect pleasure that God hath prepared for His creatures. It lasts when all other pleasures fade. It will support you when all other recreations are gone. It will last you until your death. It will make your hours pleasant to you as long as you live.



O BLESSED Letters! that combine in one

SAMUEL
DANIEL
1775-1811

All ages past, and make one live with all,
By you we do confer with who are gone,
And the dead-living unto council call;
By you the unborn shall have communion
Of what we feel and what doth us befall.



EDWARD DYER

LIBRARIES are the wardrobes of literature, whence men, properly informed, may bring forth something for ornament, much for curiosity, and more for use.

LET not thy precious tomes rest on
the shelves,

Pass them from hand to hand,
This rugged soil to him that sows and
delves

Shall be a fruitful land.

Wouldst thou, poor miser, hoard the
precious seed

Nor share with kindred mind ?
Nor like a watchful shepherd gladly
feed

The hungry left behind ?

Nor e'er forget that "too much rest is
rust,"

Hand on the buried lore.

Shall not these tomes of thine soon turn
to dust ?

Then grave them o'er and o'er.

On pages of the mind that yet shall rise
And rescue from Time's grasp

The noble thoughts enshrined by good
and wise,

Now hidden 'neath a clasp.

From "The Thoughts of Lucie Halliday."

BY PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR.

The Freedom
of Books

LORD
BEACONSFIELD
1804-1881

AN author may influence the fortunes of the world to as great an extent as a statesman or a warrior. A book may be as great a thing as a battle, and there are systems of Philosophy which have produced as great revolutions as any that have disturbed the social and political existence of our centuries.



RICHARD
DE BURY
1287-1348

THE library of wisdom is more precious than all riches, and nothing that can be wished for is worthy to be compared with it. Whosoever acknowledges himself to be a zealous follower of truth, of happiness, of wisdom, must of necessity make himself a lover of books.



E. PAXTON
HOOD
1820-1885

BOOKS are the wings to the soul ; their faithful thoughts, their high and noble aspirations, their refreshing meditations, are wings to bear us upward—onward.

IN the highest civilisation the book is still the highest delight. He who has once known its satisfaction is provided with a resource against calamity. Like Plato's disciple who has perceived a truth, "He is preserved from harm until another period."



BOOKS. . . . Give me leave
To enjoy myself; that place does
contain

My books, the best companions, is to me
A glorious court, where hourly I converse

With the old sages and philosophers,
And sometimes for variety I confer
With kings and emperors, and weigh
their counsels;

Calling their victories, if unjustly got,
Unto a strict account and in my fancy
Deface their ill-placed statues. Can I
then

Part with such silent pleasures, to embrace

Uncertain vanities?

The
Civilizing
Power of
Books

EMERSON
1803-1882

FRANCIS
BEAUMONT
1584-1616

Books that
Reveal

H. D.
THOREAU
1817-1862

IT is not all books that are as dull as their readers. There are probably words addressed to our condition exactly, which, if we could really hear and understand, would be more salutary than the morning or the spring to our lives, and possibly put a new aspect on the face of things for us. How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book. The book exists for us, perchance, which will explain our miracles and reveal new ones. The at present unutterable things we may find somewhere uttered. These same questions that disturb and puzzle and confound us have in their turn occurred to all the wise men; not one has been omitted; and each has answered them, according to his ability, by his words and his life. Moreover, with wisdom we shall learn liberality. The solitary hired man on a farm in the outskirts of Concord, who has had his second birth and peculiar religious experience, and is driven, as he believes, into silent gravity and exclusiveness by his faith, may

think it is not true ; but Zoroaster, thousands of years ago, travelled the same road and had the same experience ; but he, being wise, knew it to be universal, and treated his neighbours accordingly, and is even said to have invented and established worship among men.



I LOVE vast libraries, yet there is a doubt

If one be better with them or without,
Unless he use them wisely, and indeed,
Knows the high art of what and how to read.

At learning's fountain it is sweet to drink,

But 'tis a nobler privilege to think ;
And oft from books apart, the thirsting mind

May make the nectar which it cannot find,

'Tis well to borrow from the good and great ;

'Tis wise to learn ; 'tis Godlike to create !

Books that
Reveal

The Creation
of Good
Literature

JOHN
GODFREY
SAXE
1816-1887

When and
Where
to Read

CHARLES
LAMB
1775-1834

E. B.
BROWNING

MUCH depends upon *when* and *where* you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes, before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up the Fairy Queen for a stop-gap, or a volume of Bishop Andrewes' sermons?

Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him. But he brings his music, to which, who listens, had need bring docile thoughts and purged ears.

Winter evenings—the world shut out—with less of ceremony the gentle Shakspeare enters. At such a season, the Tempest, or his own Winter's Tale.

These two poets you cannot avoid reading aloud—to yourself, or (as it chances) to some single person listening. More than one—and it degenerates into an audience.



BOOKS are men of higher stature,
And the only men that speak aloud
for future times to hear.

TAKE me to some still abode,
 Underneath some woody hill ;
 By some timber-skirted road,
 By some willow-shaded rill ;

Where along the rocky brook
 Flying echoes sweetly sound,
 And the hoarsely-croaking rook
 Builds upon the trees around.

Take me to some lofty room,
 Lighted from the western sky,
 Where no glare dispels the gloom
 Till the golden eve is nigh.

Where the works of searching thought,
 Chosen books, may still impart
 What the wise of old have taught,
 What has tried the meek of heart.

Books in long-dead tongues, that stirred
 Living hearts in other climes ;
 Telling to my eyes, unheard,
 Glorious deeds of olden times.

Books that purify the thought,
 Spirits of the learned dead,
 Teachers of the little taught,
 Comforters when friends are fled.

Books as
 Teachers

WILLIAM
 BARNES
 1801-1886

Books a
Refuge from
the Worries
of Life

LORD
ROSEBERY
1847

IT seems to me that books are the great democratic agent of the world. You hear of many democratic agencies—you have heard, for instance, of the invention of gunpowder, and how it destroyed chivalry and swept away the knights in armour and the aristocracy of war. The invention of gunpowder had that levelling effect on the battles of the Middle Ages. The invention of printing has worked more slowly, but not less effectually. It has worked more slowly because, in the first place, it only brought the learning out of the monasteries in which it was secluded into the palaces of the great. It brought it from the palaces of the great to the central places of learning as they existed in this country: but it has taken a long and a weary time—though that time has now come—to bring it from the central places of learning in this country to the homes and hearts of the people. What does that fact mean? It means that the men who possess that literature, whether they give 4*d.* for the cheapest possible edition, or whether

they give £500 for a first edition of which there may be only three copies, are placed on a level, and that this influence, democratizing as I believe it to be, is not democratizing in the sense of levelling, it is democratizing in the sense of elevating. For instance, the man who enjoys Shakespeare—the book for which Tennyson asked on his deathbed—enters a freemasonry to which all the greatest who have lived since Shakespeare belong. He sits down to a banquet to which no rank, no wealth without the necessary qualification — without the necessary wedding-garment—can obtain admittance. And not merely by that is he placed in direct relation with the mind of the man who wrote that book, not merely has he an opportunity of endeavouring by his own perception to find out new nooks, new doors, and new paths in this most marvellous production of the Almighty which is called Shakespeare's mind, but he is placed also in communication with those before him, with the great minds of all time who

Books a
Refuge from
the Worries
of Life

Books a
Refuge from
the Worries
of Life

LORD
ROSEBURY
1847

H. D.
THOREAU
1817-1862

have enjoyed Shakespeare's works. I say, I believe we cannot exaggerate the intellectual freemasonry which the cheapening and diffusing of literature among us has done for our people. It has raised humanity itself, and I believe that that cheapening progress will go on to such an extent that we can hardly foretell what the future of this movement will be. It is not merely that you place yourself in relation with these great minds, but that you have at your hand in a book a refuge for all the worries, all the miseries, and all the anxieties of life. You may not have a room to sit in, but if you have a book to read, you have something which may remove you from this life to something better.



AN honest book is the noblest work of man. It will do the world no good hereafter, if you merely exist, and pass life smoothly or roughly; but to have thoughts and write them down, that helps greatly.

EXCEPT a living man, there is nothing more wonderful than a book!—a message to us from the dead—from human souls whom we never saw, who lived perhaps thousands of miles away: and yet these, on those little sheets of paper, speak to us, amuse us, vivify us, teach us, comfort us, open their hearts to us as brothers. . . . I say we ought to reverence books, to look at them as useful and mighty things. If they are good and true, whether they are about religion or politics, farming, trade, or medicine, they are the message of Christ, the maker of all things, the teacher of all truth, which He has put into the heart of some man to speak, that he may tell us what is good for our spirits, for our bodies, for our country. Would to God that all here would make the rule never to look into an evil book!



NO entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting.

The
Wonderful
Character of
Books

CHARLES
KINGSLEY
1819-1875

LADY MARY
WORTLEY
MONTAGU

104	The Pleasures
<p data-bbox="160 257 295 319">Thoughtful Reading</p> <p data-bbox="146 794 304 917">LORD RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN 1832-1900</p>	<p data-bbox="329 257 971 1458">ON the subject of books, their reading must be thoughtful. There were many things which tended against the habit of close, thoughtful reading nowadays. There were the enormous number of newspapers, and the multiplicity of magazines, which were a temptation to the cheap and easy acquisition of information. What was the explanation of the influence of the Press—an institution for which he had the greatest respect? Firstly, it was owing to its supplying the public with facts; and in this respect it was almost impossible to exaggerate its importance. But besides this the Press supplied the public with what might be called didactic information, which was given anonymously, and therefore had the more weight. In these days of hurry and bustle men had no time to think for themselves, and hence their view was a <i>tabula rasa</i>—a white sheet ready to take up the first impression which came along. There was an old Latin proverb which said, “<i>Lege multum non multa.</i>” Sound know-</p>

ledge upon a given subject was worth more than the knowledge which skims the surface of a dozen subjects, and does not dive into any of them.



THE light of the lamp as softly falls
As music on weary souls, and
around,

Above and below, not an inch is found
Uncovered by books, for of course, the
walls,

From ceiling to floor, from window to
door,
Are packed with the trophies of many
old stalls,

And vainly you'll search for table or
chair

Unblessed with its burden of learning
to bear,

But one little spot there is that is not
Thus weighted with tomes—that corner
I mean,

Defended with folios huge for a screen,
Not too large a bit that armchair to
admit,

The cosiest armchair that ever was seen.

Thoughtful
Reading

The Library
Book and
Chair

RICHARD LE
GALLIENNE

The Reading
of Supreme
BooksJAMES
RUSSELL
LOWELL
1819-1891

ONE is sometimes asked by young people to recommend a course of reading. My advice would be that they should confine themselves to the supreme books in whatever literature; or, still better, to choose some one great author, and make themselves thoroughly familiar with him. For as all roads lead to Rome, so do they likewise lead away from it; and you will find that, in order to understand perfectly and weigh exactly any vital piece of literature, you will be gradually and pleasantly persuaded to excursions and explorations of which you little dreamed when you began, and you will find yourselves scholars before you are aware.

A library should contain ample stores of history. History is, indeed, mainly the biography of a few imperial men, and forces home upon us the useful lesson, how infinitesimally important our own private affairs are to the universe in general. History is clarified experience, and yet how little do men profit by it! Nay, how should we expect it of those

who seldom are taught anything by their own ! Delusions, especially economical delusions, seem the only things that have any chance of an earthly immortality.

A library should also have many and full shelves of political economy ; for the " dismal science," if it prove nothing else, will go far towards proving that the millennium will not hasten its coming in deference to the most convincing string of resolutions that ever were unanimously adopted in public meeting. It likewise induces in us a profound distrust of social panaceas.



BOOKS, like friendships, grow into our lives, modify and stimulate them, and are sometimes their brightest sunshine.

Books to live must have something of all time in them, something that belongs to all generations, that is human, alive, vibrating, that belongs to both past and present.

The Reading
of Supreme
Books

LADY MILNES
GASKELL

A Revere
in Books

E. B.
BROWNING
1806-1861

I SATE on in my chamber green,
And lived my life, and thought my
thoughts, and prayed
My prayers without the vicar ; read my
books,
Without considering whether they were
fit
To do me good. Mark, there. We get
no good
By being ungenerous even to a book,
And calculating profits—so much help
By so much reading. It is rather when
We gloriously forget ourselves and
plunge
Soul-forward, headlong, into a book's
profound,
Impassioned for its beauty and salt of
truth—
'Tis then we get the right good from a
book.

I read much. What my father taught
before
From many a volume. Love re-empha-
sized
Upon the self-same pages ; Theophrast
Grew tender with the memory of his
eyes,

And Aelian made mine wet. The trick
of Greek

And Latin he had taught me, as he would
Have taught me wrestling or the game
of fives

If such he had known,—most like a
shipwrecked man

Who heaps his single platter with goats'
cheese

And scarlet berries ; or like any man
Who loves but one, and so gives all at
once,

Because he has it, rather than because
He counts it worthy. Thus my father
gave ;

.

I read books bad and good—some bad
and good

At once (good aims not always make
good books ;

Well-tempered spades turn up ill-smell-
ing soils

In digging vineyards even) ; books that
prove

God's being so definitely, that man's
doubt

Grows self-defined the other side the
line,

A Revere
in Books

A Revere
in Books

Made atheist by suggestion; moral
books.

Exasperating to licence; genial books,
Discounting from the human dignity;
And merry books, which set you weeping
when

The sun shines—aye, and melancholy
books

E. B.
BROWNING
1806-1861

Which make you laugh that anyone
should weep

In this disjointed life, for one wrong
more.

The world of books is still the world, I
write,

And both worlds have God's providence,
thank God,

To keep and hearten.



The
Preciousness
of Books

HENRY WARD
BEECHER

BOOKS are the windows through
which the soul looks out. A home
without books is like a room without
windows. No man has a right to bring
up his children without surrounding
them with books, if he has the means to
buy them. It is wrong to his family.
He cheats them!

BLESSED comforters are ye—
 Well-springs of serenity—
 Curing all sad perturbations
 With your silent inspirations !
 Bitter thoughts ye soothe, I wist,
 Leading Fancy as ye list.
 When the soul is running riot,
 Ye restore her with your quiet ;
 Or from brooding sorrow wean,
 Scene revealing after scene—
 Pointing upwards to the Holy,
 Guiding downwards to the Lowly,
 Drawing onwards to the Right,
 Love inspiring—or delight—
 As I turn your varied pages,
 Stamped with brain-work of the ages.
 W.



A BORROWED book is but a cheap
 pleasure, an unappreciated and un-
 satisfactory tool. To know the true
 value of books, and to derive any satis-
 factory benefit from them, you must
 first feel the sweet delight of buying
 them—you must know the preciousness
 of possession.

The Comfort
of Books

J. M.
BALDWIN

The
Gratification
of Books

WILLIAM
GODWIN
1756-1836

BOOKS are the depository of everything that is most honourable to man. Literature, taken in all its bearings, forms the grand line of demarcation between the human and the animal kingdoms. He that loves reading has everything within his reach. He has but to desire; and he may possess himself of every species of wisdom to judge, and power to perform. . . . Books gratify and excite our curiosity in innumerable ways. They force us to reflect. They hurry us from point to point. They present direct ideas of various kinds, and they suggest indirect ones. In a well-written book we are presented with the maturest reflections, or the happiest flights, of a mind of uncommon excellence. It is impossible that we can be much accustomed to such companions, without attaining some resemblance of them. When I read Thomson I become Thomson; when I read Milton I become Milton. I find myself a sort of intellectual chameleon, assuming the colour of

the substances on which I rest. He that revels in a well-chosen library, has innumerable dishes, and all of admirable flavour. His taste is rendered so acute as easily to distinguish the nicest shades of difference. His mind becomes ductile, susceptible to every impression, and gaining new refinement from them all. His varieties of thinking baffle calculation, and his powers, whether of reason or fancy, become eminently vigorous.



OUR own old favourite books read
o'er and o'er

Ne'er failed to charm again and yet
again ;

We freshly savoured all the pith and
core

Of jests from Sheridan's or Molière's
brain ;

Jack Falstaff's racy wit ne'er lost
its zest,

And Shakespeare's fun we always
found the best.

The
Gratification
of Books

MARY
COWDEN-
CLARKE
1809-1898

Some Lords
of Thought

J. G.
WHITTIER
1807-1892

“LET there be light!” God spake
of old,

And over chaos dark and cold,
And through the dead and formless frame
Of nature, life and order came.

Faint was the light at first that shone
On giant fern and mastadon,
On half-formed plant and beast of prey,
And man as rude and wild as they.

Age after age, like waves o’erran
The earth, uplifting brute and man ;
And mind, at length, in symbols dark
Its meanings traced on stone and bark.

On leaf of palm, on sedge-wrought roll,
On plastic clay and leathern scroll,
Man wrote his thoughts; the ages passed,
And lo! the Press was found at last.

Then dead souls woke; the thoughts of
men

Whose bones were dust revived again ;
The cloister’s silence found a tongue,
Old prophets spake, old poets sung.

And here to-day, the dead look down,
The kings of mind again we crown ;

We hear the voices lost so long,
The sage's word, the sibyl's song.

Here Greek and Roman find themselves
Alive along these crowded shelves ;
And Shakespeare treads again his stage,
And Chaucer paints anew his age.

As if some Pantheon's marbles broke
Their stony trance, and lived and spoke,
Life thrills along the alcoved hall,
The lords of thought await our call.



BETTER than men and women,
friend,

That are dust, though dear to our joy
and pain,

Are the books their cunning hands have
penned,

For they depart, but the books remain ;
Through these they speak to us what
was best

In the loving heart and the noble mind ;
All their royal souls possessed

Belongs for ever to mankind !

When others fail him, the wise man looks
To the sure companionship of books.

Some Lords
of Thought

The
Companionship of Books

RICHARD
HENRY
STODDARD
1825-1903

The
Influence of
Books

MOST REV.
RANDALL
DAVIDSON,
ARCHBISHOP
OF
CANTERBURY
1848

IF you look back upon the history of the world how enormous is the debt that the world owes to literature! What a difference it makes in the lives of every one of us that the great writers of past times should have existed and have written! Every one of us, far beyond any interest we can frame, is really the better because some great orator spoke, because some great poet sang, because some great historian wrote. Is it not by such food as this that the human intellect grows? Is it not in this way that men rise to a higher level of humanity? There are higher things than mere intellectual cultivation; there are nobler and higher things no doubt, and we do not put and never can put the services of literature on a level with those services of whatever kind that tend to form the characters of men; but nevertheless, although character will always stand above everything else, the rise of intellectual power is a benefit to society which it will be impossible for us to give up without forfeiting a great

deal that makes us worthy to exist. Think of a past without any literature at all! Think of a past in which there was no history and no poetry, of a past where men were contented to live on the life, as it were, of dumb animals, to live on like irrational beings! Think of such a past and compare that with the past of our own country, for instance, or with the past which is wrapped up in all those studies which literary men pursue! Is there anyone who would not give up a great deal rather than give up the great monuments of literary power of past days? Can we afford to lose any one of these great writers who in past days have, according to the poet's praise, written to enrich the blood of the world. Yes, the spiritual blood of the world is enriched by the contribution of literary men, and it is impossible to honour them too much for that which they have done for us. Is there anyone who has passed through any course of study whatever worthy of the name who does not feel in his own soul that he is a

The
Influence of
Books

MOST REV.
RANDALL
DAVIDSON,
ARCHBISHOP
OF
CANTERBURY
1848

different creature, a nobler creature, upon whom there is a higher demand made, simply because he has had the advantages of studies which have been brought within reach of life by those who have contributed in past days to what we now treasure so much? When I go into a great library, when I think of all the men whose productions are set up upon the walls, and when I think upon what humanity would be without them, and when I think of what I myself have learned from so many of them, I feel as if, of all the things for which I am grateful to God, I know of but one that stands above the gift of a noble literature, and that is God's own Revelation. And when we put that high above everything else, I know nothing that I can rank higher than the literature which ennobles our country.



C. C. COLTON

SOME treat books as they do lords; they inform themselves of their titles, and then boast of an intimate acquaintance.

WHAT a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of the writers that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those scintial apples which grew amid the happy orchard.



I LOVE my books! they are companions dear,
Sterling in worth, in friendship most sincere;
Here talk with the wise in ages gone,
And with the nobly gifted of our own:
If love, joy, laughter, sorrow please my mind,
Love, joy, grief, laughter in my books I find.

Thoughts in
an Old
Library

CHARLES
LAMB
1775-1834

The
Companionship of Books

FRANCIS
BENNOCH

The Taste
for ReadingC. F.
RICHARDSON
1841

THE very first thing to be remembered by him who would study the art of reading is that nothing can take the place of personal enthusiasm and personal work. However wise may be the friendly adviser, and however full and perfect the chosen hand-book of reading, neither can do more than to stimulate and suggest. Nothing can take the place of a direct familiarity with books themselves. To *know* one good book well, is better than to know something *about* a hundred good books at second-hand. The taste for reading and the habit of reading must always be developed from within; they can never be added from without. . . .

The general agreement of intelligent people as to the merit of an author or the worth of a book, is, of course, to be accepted until one finds some valid reason for reversing it. But nothing is to be gained by pretending to like what one really dislikes, or to enjoy what one does not find profitable, or even intelligible. If a reader is not honest and

sincere in this matter, there is small hope for him. The lowest taste may be cultivated and improved and radically changed; but pretence and artificiality can never grow into anything better. They must be wholly rooted out at the start. If you dislike Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and greatly enjoy a trashy story, say so with sincerity and sorrow, if occasion requires, and hope and work for a reversal of your taste. "It's guid to be honest and true," says Burns, and nowhere is honesty more needed than here. . . .



NO book is worth anything which is not worth *much*; nor is it serviceable, until it has been read and re-read, and loved and loved again, and marked, so that you can refer to the passages you want in it, as the soldier can seize the weapon he needs in an armoury, or a housewife the spice she needs from her store.

The Society
of Books

RIGHT HON.
W. E.
GLADSTONE
1809-1898

BOOKS are delightful society. If you go into a room and find it full of books—even without taking them from their shelves they seem to speak to you, to bid you welcome. They seem to tell you that they have got something inside their covers that will be good for you, and that they are willing and desirous to impart to you. Value them much. Endeavour to turn them to good account, and pray recollect this, that the education of the mind is not merely a storage of goods in the mind. The mind of man, some people seem to think, is a storehouse which should be filled with a quantity of useful commodities which may be taken out like packets from a shop, and delivered and distributed according to the occasions of life. I will not say that this is not true as far as it goes, but it goes a very little way; for commodities may be taken in, and commodities may be taken out, but the warehouse remains just the same as it was before, or probably a little worse. That ought not to be the case with a man's mind.

IN general terms, one has passed the proper limit of reading when he reads without suitable apprehension, and understanding, and promise of retention in memory, of the page before him, whether it be novel or history, humorous poem or didactic verse. "Reading with me incites to reflection instantly," says Mr. Beecher; "I cannot separate the origination of ideas from the reception of ideas; the consequence is, as I read, I always begin to think in various directions, and that makes my reading slow." Dugald Stewart thus emphasizes this duty of thoughtfulness in reading: "Nothing in truth has such a tendency to weaken, not only the powers of invention, but the intellectual powers in general, as a habit of extensive and general reading without reflection. The activity and force of the mind are gradually impaired in consequence of disuse; and, not unfrequently, all our principles and opinions come to be lost in the infinite multiplicity and discordancy of our acquired ideas.

The Taste
for Reading

C. F.
RICHARDSON
1841

Books the
Knowledge of
the Wise

DEAN FARRAR
1831-1903

THANKS to the printed page, it is not the blood-stained conquerors, not the despotic kings, not the ignorant shouters of anarchy, who rule the world ; it is the knowledge of the wise.

.

More eternal than the Pyramids, they are the imperishable shrines, not of dead ashes, but of living souls. It is by their means that truths become irresistible. A monk at Erfurt sits poring over the Epistle to the Galatians in his lonely cell. While he is musing, the fire burns. At last he speaks with his tongue, and, lo ! the nations, laughing to scorn the impotence of popes and emperors, shake a thousand of years of cruel tyranny and superstitious priestcraft to the dust. An astronomer observes through his rude telescope the planet Venus in crescent, divines the facts of the planetary system, is denounced as a heretic, thrown into the dungeons of the Inquisition, and forced to recant upon his knees. A few years pass, and by the help of the printed page men see that this heresy was an

eternal truth, and that this discoverer whom priests treated as a criminal had done more than any who yet had lived to reveal to man's mind the plan of God.

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Then think what books have done for liberty! In old days of the struggle for freedom many a grand speech might die away within the walls where it was uttered: now by the aid of the printing-press, reverberated through all the nations, it may go thrilling and thrilling through the world, and come rolling back to the speaker in millions of echoes. The spoken word may reach two or three thousand; the printed page may be read by three hundred millions of men and women.

.

"Give them," said Sheridan, "a corrupt House of Lords, give them a venal House of Commons, give them a tyrannical prince, give them a truckling court, and let me have an unfettered press, and I will defy them to encroach but a hair's breadth on the liberty of England.

Books the
Knowledge of
the Wise

Books are
always with
us

J. A.
LANGFORD
1823

THE only true equalisers in the world are books; the only treasure-house open to all comers is a library; the only wealth which will not decay is knowledge; the only jewel which you can carry beyond the grave is wisdom. To live in this equality, to share in these treasures, to possess this wealth, and to secure this jewel may be the happy lot of every one. All that is needed for the acquisition of these inestimable treasures is the love of books. . . .

As friends and companions, as teachers and consolers, as recreators and amusers, books are always with us, and always ready to respond to our wants. We can take them with us in our wanderings, or gather them around us at our firesides. In the lonely wilderness, and the crowded city, their spirit will be with us, giving a meaning to the seemingly confused movements of humanity, and peopling the desert with their own bright creations. Without the love of books the richest man is poor; but endowed with this treasure of treasures, the

poorest man is rich. He has wealth which no power can diminish ; riches which are always increasing : possessions which the more he scatters the more they accumulate, friends who never desert him, and pleasures that never cloy.



CONSIDER what you have in the smallest chosen library. A company of the wisest and wittiest men that could be picked out of all civil countries, in a thousand years, have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom. The men themselves were hid and inaccessible, solitary, impatient of interruption, fenced by etiquette ; but the thought which they did not uncover to their bosom friend is here written out in transparent words to us, the strangers of another age. We owe to books those general benefits which come from high intellectual action. Thus, I think, we often owe to them the perception of immortality.

Books are
always with
us

The Benefits
of Books

R. W.
EMERSON
1803-1882

The
Greatness of
English
Literature

SIDNEY LEE
1859

THE study of literature as literature—
as an embodiment of the best
thought and emotion set forth in the
best forms of which words are capable—
the study of literature in this sense is, I
believe, the best instrument in liberali-
zing education, and for us English
people I think that our own literature
might not prove the worst instrument
wherewith to gain this end.

The Greeks, who fully recognized the
place that literature should occupy in a
liberal education, found in their own
literature the means of supplying their
youth with liberal culture. And their
education was not the less efficient in
consequence. The Romans undoubtedly
drew most of their liberal culture from
Greek literature, but the inferiority of all
but a small fraction of their own literary
effort does not make their experience
altogether parallel to our own. A
Frenchman a hundred years ago asserted
that English literature was the most
varied in the world. It has grown since
then, and the greatness of the inheri-

tance in quality and in quantity is indisputable. It kindles enthusiasm in all who are competent to study it at home or abroad.



WHEN a man loves books he has in him that which will console him under many sorrows and strengthen him in various trials. Such a love will keep him at home, and make his time pass pleasantly. Even when visited by bodily or mental affliction he can resort to this book-love and be cured. . . . And when a man is at home and happy with a book, sitting by his fireside, he must be a churl if he does not communicate that happiness. Let him read now and then to his wife and children. Those thoughts will grow and take root in the hearts of the listeners. Good scattered about is indeed the seed of the sower. A man who feels sympathy with what is good and noble, is at the time he feels that sympathy good and noble himself.

The Love of
Books

J. H.
FRISWELL
1827-1878

Farewell
Sonnet to My
Books

W. ROSCOE
1753-1831

AS one who, destined from his friends
to part,

Regrets his loss, but hopes again ere-
while

To share their converse and enjoy
their smile,

And tempers as he may affliction's dart.

Thus, loved associates, chiefs of elder
art,

Teachers of wisdom, who could once
beguile,

My tedious hours, and lighten every
toil,

I now resign you ; nor with fainting
heart.

For pass a few short years, or days, or
hours,

And happier seasons may their dawn
unfold ;

And all your sacred fellowship restore,
When freed from earth, unlimited its
powers,

Mind shall with mind direct commu-
nion hold,

And kindred spirits meet to part no
more.

EDUCATION begins the gentleman, but reading, good company, and reflection must finish him.

Those who have read of everything are thought to understand everything too; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what is read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections; unless we chew them over again they will not give us strength and nourishment.



BOOKS are faithful repositories which may be awhile neglected or forgotten; but when they are opened again, will again impart their instruction.



IF the crowns of all the kingdoms of the Empire were laid down at my feet in exchange for my books and my love of reading, I would spurn them all.

The Mind
Furnished by
Reading

JOHN LOCKE
1632-1704

DR. S.
JOHNSON

FÉNELON

Books as
Mental
Nourishment

A. SCHOPEN-
HAUER
1788-1860

AS regards *reading*, to require that a man shall retain everything he has ever read, is like asking him to carry about with him all he has ever eaten. The one kind of food has given him bodily, and the other mental, nourishment; and it is through these two means that he has grown to be what he is. The body assimilates only that which is like it; and so a man retains in his mind only that which interests him, in other words, that which suits his system of thought or his purposes in life. Every one has purposes, no doubt; but very few have anything like a system of thought. Few people take an objective interest in anything, and so their reading does them no good; they retain nothing.

If a man wants to read good books, he must make a point of avoiding bad ones; for life is short, and time and energy limited.

Any book that is at all important ought at once to be read through, twice; partly because, on a second reading, the connection of the different portions of

the book will be better understood, and the beginning comprehended only when the end is known; and partly because we are not in the same temper and disposition on both readings. On the second perusal we get a new view of every passage and a different impression of the whole book, which then appears in another light.

It would be a good thing to buy books if one could also buy the time in which to read them; but generally the purchase of a book is mistaken for the acquisition of its contents.

A man's works are the quintessence of his mind, and even though he may possess very great capacity, they will always be incomparably more valuable than his conversation. Nay, in all essential matters his works will not only make up for the lack of personal intercourse with him, but they will far surpass it in solid advantages. The writings even of a man of moderate genius may be edifying, worth reading and instructive, because they are his

Books as
Mental
Nourishment

quintessence—the result and fruit of all his thoughts and study ; whilst conversation with him may be unsatisfactory.

So it is that we can read books by men in whose company we find nothing to please, and that a high degree of culture leads us to seek entertainment almost wholly from books and not from men.



Books our
Luxuries

HENRY
STEVENS
1819-1886

BOOKS are both our luxuries and our daily bread. They have become to our lives and happiness prime necessities. They are our trusted favourites, our guardians, our confidential advisers, and the safe consumers of our leisure. They cheer us in poverty, and comfort us in the misery of affluence. They absorb the effervescence of impetuous youth, and while away the tedium of age. You may not teach ignorance to a youth who carries a favourite book in his pocket ; and to a man who masters his appetites a good book is a talisman which insures him against the dangers of overspeed, idleness, and shallowness.

READING without purpose is sauntering, not exercise. More is got from one book on which the thought settles for a definite end in knowledge, than from libraries skimmed over by a wandering eye. A cottage flower gives honey to the bee, a king's garden none to the butterfly.

I say that books, taken indiscriminately, are no cure to the diseases and afflictions of the mind. There is a world of science necessary in the taking them. I have known some people in great sorrow fly to a novel, or the last light book in fashion. One might as well take a rose-drop for the plague ! Light reading does not do when the heart is really heavy.



THERE is unspeakable pleasure attending the life of a voluntary student. The first time I read an excellent book it is to me just as if I had gained a new friend ; when I read over a book I have perused before, it resembles the meeting with an old one.

Purposeless
Reading

LORD
LYTTON
1803-1873

New Books
are New
Friends

OLIVER
GOLDSMITH
1728-1774

Books Better
than
Preachers

RICHARD
BAXTER
1615-1691

BUT books have the advantage in many other respects; you may read an able preacher, when you have but a mean one to hear. Every congregation cannot hear the most judicious or powerful preachers: but every single person may read the books of the most powerful and judicious. Preachers may be silenced or banished, when books may be at hand; books may be kept at a smaller charge than preachers; we may choose books which treat of that very subject which we desire to hear of; but we cannot choose what subject the preacher shall treat of. Books we may have at hand every day and hour; when we can have sermons but seldom, and at set times. If sermons be forgotten, they are gone. But a book we may read over and over again until we remember it; and, if we forget it, may again peruse it at our pleasure, or at our leisure. So that good books are a very great mercy to the world.



THE rain is playing its soft pleasant
tune

The Solace
of Books

Fitfully on the skylight and the shade
Of the fast-flying clouds across my book
Passes with gliding change. My merry
fire

Sings cheerfully to itself; my musing
cat

Purrs as she wakes from her unquiet
sleep,

And looks into my face as if she felt,
Like me, the gentle influence of the rain.

Here have I sat since morn, reading
sometimes,

And sometimes listening to the faster
fall

Of the large drops, or, rising with the
stir

Of an unbidden thought, have walked
awhile,

With the slow steps of indolence, my
room,

And then sat down composedly again
To my quaint book of olden poetry.



BOOKS are the immortal sons deifying
their sires.

PLATO

Books the
Treasured
Wealth of
the World

H. D.
THOREAU
1817-1862

NO wonder that Alexander carried the *Iliad* with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. A written word is the choicest of relics. It is something at once more intimate with us and more universal than any other work of art nearest to life itself. It may be translated into every language, and not only be read but actually be breathed from all human lips ;—not be represented on canvas or in marble only, but be carved out of the breath of life itself. The symbol of an ancient man's thought becomes a modern man's speech. Two thousand summers have imparted to the monuments of Grecian literature, as to her marbles, only a maturer golden and autumnal tint, for they have carried their own serene and celestial atmosphere into all lands to protect them against the corrosion of time. Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations. Books, the oldest and the best, stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage. They have no cause

of their own to plead, but while they enlighten and sustain the reader, his common-sense will not refuse them. Their authors are natural and irresistible aristocracy in every society, and, more than kings or emperors, exert an influence on mankind.



LEARNING is not to be won by short cuts or royal roads, yet, as the philosopher's stone could turn whatever it touched into gold, so the true lover of literature can, by the alchemy of a sympathetic mind, find the true gold of the intellect in the works to which he applies himself.



WHILE you converse with lords and dukes,

I have their betters here—my books ;
Fixed in an elbow chair at ease

I choose my companions as I please,
I'd rather have one single shelf

Than all my friends, except yourself.

Books the
Treasured
Wealth of
the World

The True
Lover of
Literature

EARL OF
IDDESLEIGH
1805-1881

THOMAS
SHERIDAN

Books the
Greatest
Decoration

JOHN BRIGHT
1811-1889

WHAT is a great love of books? It is something like a personal introduction to the great and good men of all past times. Books, it is true, are silent as you see them on their shelves; but silent as they are, when I enter a library I feel as if almost the dead were present, and I know if I put questions to these books they will answer me with all the faithfulness and fulness which has been left in them by the great men who have left the books with us. Have none of us, or may I not say, are there any of us who have not, felt some of this feeling when in a great library? When you are within its walls, and see these shelves, these thousands of volumes, and consider for a moment who they are that wrote them, who has gathered them together, for whom are they intended, how much wisdom they contain, what they tell the future ages, it is impossible not to feel something of solemnity and tranquillity when you are spending time in rooms like these; and if you come to houses of less

note you find libraries that are of great estimation, and which in a less degree are able to afford mental aliment to those who are connected with them: and I am bound to say—and if any one cares very much for anything else they will not blame me—I say to them you may have in a house costly pictures and costly ornaments, and a great variety of decoration, yet, so far as my judgment goes, I would prefer to have one comfortable room well stocked with books to all you can give me in the way of decoration which the highest art can supply. The only subject of lamentation is—one feels that always, I think, in the presence of a library—that life is too short, and I am afraid I must say also that our industry is so far deficient, that we seem to have no hope of a full enjoyment of the ample repast that is spread before us. In the houses of the humble a little library in my opinion is a most precious possession. . . .

Books the
Greatest
Decoration



A
Consecrated
Ground of
Thought

F. W. FABER
1814-1863

A CHURCHYARD with a cloister
running round

And quaint old effigies in act of prayer,
And painted banners mouldering
strangely there

Where mitred prelates and grave doctors
sleep,

Memorials of a consecrated ground !

Such is this antique room, a haunted
place

Where dead men's spirits come, and
angels keep

Long hours of watch with wings in
silence furled.

Early and late have I kept vigil here ;
And I have seen the moonlight shadows
trace

Dim glories on the missal's blue and
gold,

The work of my scholastic sires that
told

Of quiet ages men call dark and drear,
For Faith's soft light is darkness to the
world.



SINCE honour from the honourer
proceeds,

How well do they deserve, that memo-
rize

And leave in books for all posterities

The names of worthies and their vir-
tuous deeds ;

When all their glory else, like water-
weeds

Without their element, presently dies,

And all their greatness quite forgotten
lies,

And when and how they flourished no
man heeds !

How poor remembrances are statues,
tombs

And other monuments that men erect

To princes, which remain in closed
rooms,

Where but a few behold them, in
respect

Of books, that to the universal eye

Show how they lived ; the other where
they lie !

The Life of
Books

JOHN FLORIO
1553-1625



The
Greatness of
Books

LORD
MORLEY
1838

A LITERARY student is one who through books explores the strange voyages of man's moral reason, the impulses of the human heart, the chances and changes that have overtaken human ideals of virtue and happiness, of conduct and manners, and the shifting fortunes of great conceptions of truth and virtue. Poets, dramatists, humorists, satirists, masters of fiction, the great preachers, the character-writers, the maxim-writers, the great political orators—they are all literature in so far as they teach us to know man and to know human nature.



RALPH WALDO
EMERSON

THE three practical rules which I have to offer are: 1, never read any book that is not a year old. 2, never read any but famed books. 3, never read any but what you like.



Pagan
Philosophy

HAVE you knowledge?—Apply it. Have you not?—Confess your ignorance. This is true wisdom.

TO wash down the drier morsels that every library must necessarily offer at its board let there be plenty of imaginative literature, and let its range be not too narrow to stretch from Dante to the elder Dumas. The world of imagination is not the world of abstraction and nonentity, as some conceive but a world formed out of chaos by the sense of the beauty that is in man and the earth on which he dwells. It is the realm of might-be, our haven of refuge from the shortcomings and disillusion of life. It is, to quote Spenser, who knew it well, "the world's sweet inn from care and wearisome turmoil."



BOOKS beloved, ye are to me,
An unretorting family ;
Ye for each day's irritation
Always bring a compensation.
How shall sadness come or gloom,
While you lie about my room,
Looking down from friendly nook ?
—My benison upon you, Books.

The Value of
Imaginative
Literature

JAMES
RUSSELL
LOWELL
1819-1891

The
Sympathy of
Books

W.

Reading and
Thinking

REV. A.
CAMERON
1747-1828

IT is good to read, mark, learn ; but it is better to inwardly digest. It is good to read, better to think—better to think one hour than read ten hours without thinking. Thinking is to reading what rain and sunshine are to the seed cast into the ground—the influence which maketh it bear and bring forth thirty, forty, or a hundred-fold. To read is to gather into the barn or store-house of the mind ; to think is to cast seed-corn into the ground to make it productive. To read is to collect information ; to think is to evolve power. To read is to lay a burden in the bank ; but to think is to give the feet swiftness, to the hands strength. Yet we have a thousand or ten thousand readers for one thinker, as the kind of books sought after in circulating libraries bear witness.



W. COBBETT

BOOKS never annoy ; they cost little, and they are always at hand, and ready at your call.

EMPLOY your time in improving yourself by other men's writings ; so shall you come easily by that for which others have laboured hard. Prefer knowledge to wealth, for the one is transitory, the other perpetual.

SOCRATES



THE knowledge of books, like the wealth of another, is not thine until thou hast made it so ; but he who hath not knowledge serveth him who hath, to whom alone is homage paid or due.

BURMESE
PROVERB



I HAVE somewhere seen it observed, that we should make the same use of a book that the bee does of a flower ; she steals sweets from it but does not injure it.

COLTON



BUT of all the diversions of life, there is none so proper to fill up its empty spaces as the reading of useful and entertaining authors.

JOSEPH
ADDISON

The Art of Reading

I THINK that reading claims the same distinction. To adorn ideas with elegance is an act of the mind superior to that of receiving them; but to receive them with a happy discrimination, is the effect of a practised taste.

Yet it will be found that taste alone is not sufficient to obtain the proper end of reading. Two persons of equal taste rise from the perusal of the same book with very different notions; the one will have the ideas of the author at command, and find a new train of sentiment awakened; while the other quits his author in a pleasing distraction, but of the pleasures of reading nothing remains but tumultuous sensations.

• • • • •

Many ingenious readers complain that their memory is defective, and their studies unfruitful. This defect arises from their indulging the facile pleasures of perceptions, in preference to the laborious habit of forming them into ideas. Perceptions require only the sensibility of taste, and their pleasures are con-

ISAAC
D'ISRAELI
1766-1848

tinuous, easy, and exquisite. Ideas are an art of combination, and an exertion of the reasoning powers. Ideas are therefore labours; and for those who will not labour, it is unjust to complain, if they come from the harvest with scarcely a sheaf in their hands.

There are secrets in the art of reading, which tend to facilitate its purposes, by assisting the memory, and augmenting intellectual opulence. Some, our own ingenuity must form, and perhaps every student has peculiar habits of study, as, in shorthand, almost every writer has a system of his own.

A frequent impediment in reading is a disinclination in the mind to settle on the subject; agitated by incongruous and dissimilar ideas, it is with pain that we admit those of the author. But on applying ourselves with a gentle violence to the perusal of an interesting work, the mind soon assimilates to the subject; the ancient Rabbins advised their young students to apply themselves to their readings, whether they felt an

The Art of Reading

inclination or not, because, as they proceeded, they would find their disposition restored and their curiosity awakened.

Readers may be classed into an infinite number of divisions ; but an author is a solitary being, who for the same reason he pleases one, must consequently displease another. To have exalted a genius is more prejudicial to his celebrity than to have a moderate one ; for we shall find that the most popular works are not the most profound, but such as instruct those who require instruction, and charm those who are not learned to taste their novelty.

• • • • •

Authors are vain, but readers are capricious. Some will only read old books as if there were no valuable truths to be discovered in modern publications; while others will only read new books, as if some valuable truths are not among the old. Some will not read a book because they are acquainted with the author; by which the reader may be more injured than the author; others

ISAAC
D'ISRAELI
1766-1848

not only read the book, but would also read the man ; by which the most ingenious author may be injured by the most impertinent reader.



READING is to the mind what exercise is to the body. As by the one health is preserved, strengthened, and invigorated ; by the other virtue (which is the health of the mind) is kept alive, cherished, and confirmed.



HOW oft, at evening, when the mind,
o'erwrought,
Finds in dim reverie repose from thought,
Along those darkling files I ponder slow,
And muse, how vast the debt to books
we owe.



The Art of
Reading

SIR R.
STEELE

JOHN KENYON

The
Communion
of Books

BERNARD
BARTON
1784-1849

O! I methinks could dwell content
A spell-bound captive here ;
And find in such imprisonment,
Each fleeting moment dear ;—
Dear, not to outward sense alone,
But thought's most elevated tone.

The song of birds, the hum of bees,
That sweetest music make ;
The March winds, through the lofty
trees,
Their wilder strains awake ;
Or from the broad magnolia leaves
A gentler gale its spirit heaves.

Nor less the eye enraptured roves
O'er turf of freshest green,
O'er bursting flowers, and budding
groves,
And sky of changeful mien,
Where sunny glimpses, bright and blue,
The fleecy clouds are peeping through.

Thus soothed, in every passing mood,
How sweet each gifted page,
Rich with the mind's ambrosial food,

The Muse's brighter age !
How sweet, communion here to hold
With them, the mighty bards of old.

With them—whose master spirits yet
In deathless numbers dwell,
Whose works defy us to forget
Their still-surviving spell ;
That spell, which lingers in a name,
Whose very echo whispers Fame !

Could aught enhance such hours of bliss,
It were in converse known
With him who boasts a scene like this,
An Eden of his own ;
Whose taste and talent gave it birth,
And well can estimate its worth.

The
Communion
of Books



INDEX

AUTHOR	FIRST WORDS	PAGE
ADDISON, JOSEPH ...	As the Supreme Being... ..	26
„ ...	But of all the diversions of life	147
“AFTERGLOW,” THE	With unaffected gratitude ...	9
ALCOTT, L.	Good books	14
ARNOLD, MATTHEW	The great men	31
ARNOLD, DR. THOMAS	An inquiring spirit	42
AVEBURY, LORD ...	No book is worth	121
„ ...	We may sit	52
A. W. M.	Oh! for a book	32
„	Some ask for a pipe	68
BACON, FRANCIS ...	Read not to contradict... ..	19
BALDWIN, J. M. ...	A borrowed book	111
BALFOUR, A. J. ...	I am deliberately of opinion ...	22
BARNES, WILLIAM ...	Take me to some still abode ...	99
BARTON, BERNARD ...	O! I methinks	152
BAXTER, RICHARD ...	But books have	136
BAYARD, T. F. ...	To-day the smallest	47
BEACONSFIELD, LORD	A man who knows	58
„	An author may	94
BEAUMONT, FRANCIS	Books—Give me	95
BEECHER, HENRY		
WARD	Books are not made	47
„	Books are the windows	110
BENNOCH, FRANCIS...	I love my books	119
BROWNING, E. B. ...	Books are men of	98
„	I sate on in my	108

AUTHOR	FIRST WORDS	PAGE
BRIGHT, JOHN ...	What is a great ...	140
BURY, RICHARD DE... ..	Books delight us ...	85
" ...	The library of wisdom...	94
BURMESE PROVERB...	The knowledge of books	147
BYRON, LORD ...	But words are things ...	3
CAMERON, REV. A....	It is good to read ...	146
CARLYLE, THOMAS ...	On all sides ...	18
CHANNING, DR. W. E.	Books, once confined ...	66
"	It is chiefly through books	54
CHAPIN, DR. ...	Books ! The chosen ...	71
COBBETT, W. ...	Books never annoy ...	146
COBDEN, R. ...	The purest pleasures ...	15
COLLIER, JEREMY ...	Books are a guide ...	80
COLTON, C. C. ...	I have somewhere ...	147
" ...	Some treat books ...	118
COWDEN-CLARKE, MARY ...	Our own old ...	113
COWPER, WILLIAM ...	Books are not seldom ...	67
CRABBE, GEORGE ...	Books cannot always ...	36
" ...	But what strange art ...	69
DANIEL, SAMUEL ...	O blessed Letters ! ...	92
" ...	Since honour from ...	1
DARWIN, ERASMUS ...	Papyrus, throned ...	64
DAVIDSON, RANDALL	If you look back ...	116
DIBDIN, CHARLES ...	The library of a good man	90
D'ISRAELI, ISAAC ...	I think that ...	148
DODD, WILLIAM ...	O happy be the day ...	20
DOVASTON, I. F. M.	There is a sort ...	17
DUDLEY, T. ...	In literature I am fond...	90
DYER, EDWARD ...	Libraries are the ...	92
ELIOT, GEORGE ...	Wise books ...	57

AUTHOR	FIRST WORDS	PAGE
EMERSON, R. W. ...	Books are the best ...	15
„ ...	In the highest ...	95
„ ...	Consider what you have ...	127
„ ...	The three practical rules ...	144
FABER, F. W. ...	A churchyard with ...	142
FARRAR, DEAN ...	Thanks to the printed page ...	124
FÉNELON ...	If the crowns ...	131
FLORIO, JOHN ...	Since honour from ...	143
FOSKETT, EDWARD ...	Books that keep... ...	59
FRISWELL, J. H. ...	When a man loves ...	129
FULLER, THOMAS ...	To divert at any time ...	39
GASKELL, LADY MILNES ...	Books, like friendships ...	107
GENLIS, MADAME DE	How I pity those ...	49
GLADSTONE, RIGHT HON. W. E. ...	Books are delightful ...	122
GODWIN, WILLIAM ...	Books are the ...	112
GOLDSMITH, OLIVER	There is unspeakable ...	135
GOSCHEN, LORD ...	History deals ...	86
HARRISON, FREDERIC	A wise education ...	2
„	Only by a course ...	2
„	What are the subjects ...	78
HAZLITT, WILLIAM ...	If you want to know ...	11
„ ...	There is a fashion ...	38
HELPS, SIR ARTHUR	There is a very ...	13
„	What are the objects ...	12
HERSCHEL ...	Were I to pray ...	56
HILLARD, G. S. ...	Books are the friends ...	65
HOLMES, DR. O. W.	Books are the negative ...	57
HOOD, E. PAXTON ...	Books are the wings ...	94
HOOD, THOMAS ...	Many a dreary ...	91

AUTHOR	FIRST WORDS	PAGE
HORACE ...	The reading which ...	79
HORNBLOWER, F. ...	Books ! sweet associates ...	61
HOUGHTON, LORD ...	Think what a book is ...	91
IDDLESLEIGH, EARL OF	Learning is not ...	139
IRVING, WASHINGTON	The scholar only knows ...	7
"	With the true poet ...	88
JERROLD, DOUGLAS...	A blessed companion ...	36
JOHNSON, DR. SAMUEL	Books are faithful ...	131
"	For general improvement ...	27
JONSON, BEN ...	A prince without ...	83
" ...	Triumph, my Britain ...	40
" ...	When I would know ...	34
KENYON, JOHN ...	How oft, at evening ...	151
KINGSLEY, CHARLES	Except a living man ...	103
LAMB, CHARLES ...	Much depends upon ...	98
" ...	What a place ...	119
LANG, ANDREW ...	A book in a nook ...	21
LANGFORD, J. A. ...	The only true ...	126
LE GALLIENNE, R....	The light of the lamp ...	105
LEE, SIDNEY ...	The study of literature...	128
LOCKE, JOHN ...	Education begins ...	131
LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL ...	One is sometimes ...	106
" ...	There is a choice in books ...	53
" ...	To wash down ...	145
LYTTON, LORD ...	Reading without purpose ...	135
" ...	The best education ...	65
MACAULAY, LORD ...	Fill your glasses ...	60
" ...	I still retain ...	43

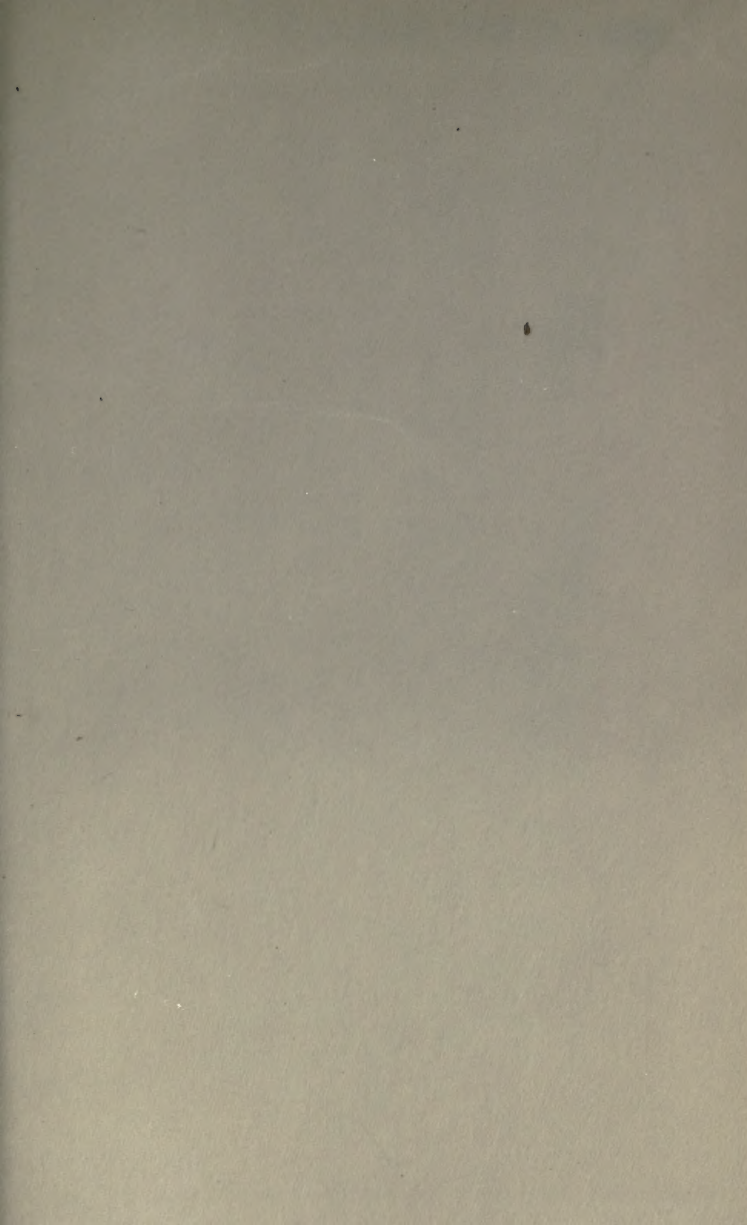
Index

159

AUTHOR		FIRST WORDS	PAGE
MAHON, LORD	...	The pleasures of reading	62
MAURICE, F. D.	...	If books do not ...	20
MICHAEL, THE BISHOP	...	And as often ...	72
MILLER, REV. J. R.	...	On what principal	48
MILTON, JOHN	...	Books are not ...	16
"	...	What needs ...	44
MONTAGU, LADY			
M. W.	...	No entertainment	103
MONTESQUIEU	...	Love of reading...	84
MORLEY, LORD	...	A literary student	144
"	...	Knowledge in worth	28
"	...	Literature consists	76
NEWMAN, CARDINAL	...	The object of	5
NORTON, HON. CAROLINE	...	Silent companions	84
OVERBURY, SIR T.	...	Books are a part	7
PAGAN PHILOSOPHY	...	Have you knowledge	144
PAGAN WISDOM	...	The learned man's	90
PALMER, S.	...	Of all things sold	90
PATTISON, MARK	...	Those who most read	46
PLATO	...	Books are the immortal	137
PLUTARCH	...	We ought to regard	56
PROCTER, B. W.	...	All round the room	10
RICHARDSON, C. F.	...	In general terms	123
"	...	The very first thing	120
RICHTER, JEAN PAUL	...	Books are the most	36
ROSCOE, W.	...	As one who	130
ROSEBURY, LORD	...	It seems to me	100
RUSKIN, JOHN	...	A common book	82
RUSSELL, LORD	...	On the subject	104

AUTHOR	FIRST WORDS	PAGE
SAXE, JOHN G. ...	Ah ! well I love... ...	55
" ...	I love vast libraries ...	97
SCHOPENHAUER, A....	As regards reading ...	132
SHAKESPEARE, WM...	If thou survive ...	51
SHAYLOR, JOSEPH ...	Books ! Books !... ...	81
" ...	When in the West ...	11
" ...	Within my humble ...	50
SHERBROOKE, LORD	Cultivate above all ...	33
SHERIDAN, THOMAS...	While you converse ...	139
SMITH, ALEXANDER...	Books written ...	34
" ...	In my garden ...	70
SOCRATES ...	Employ your time ...	147
SOUTHEY, ROBERT ...	My days among... ...	8
" ...	Praise to that Power ...	26
STENNING, INA M. ...	Youth renews ...	4
STEELE, SIR R. ...	Reading is to the mind ...	151
STEVENS, HENRY ...	Books are both ...	134
STODDARD, R. H. ...	Better than men ...	115
TEMPLE, SIR W. ...	Whoever converses ...	45
THOREAU, H. D. ...	An honest book ...	102
" ...	Books, the oldest ...	77
" ...	It is not all books ...	96
" ...	No wonder that... ...	138
TOWNSHEND, C. H.	Delight of childhood ...	89
TROLLOPE, ANTHONY	Book love ...	92
W. ...	Blessed comforters are ye ...	111
" ...	Books beloved ...	145
WALKER, GEORGE ...	My books are a treasure ...	8
WHITTIER, J. G. ...	"Let there be light " ...	114
WILLIAMS, J. ...	Oh, happy he ...	43





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